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NICK CARTER

NEW WEEKLY

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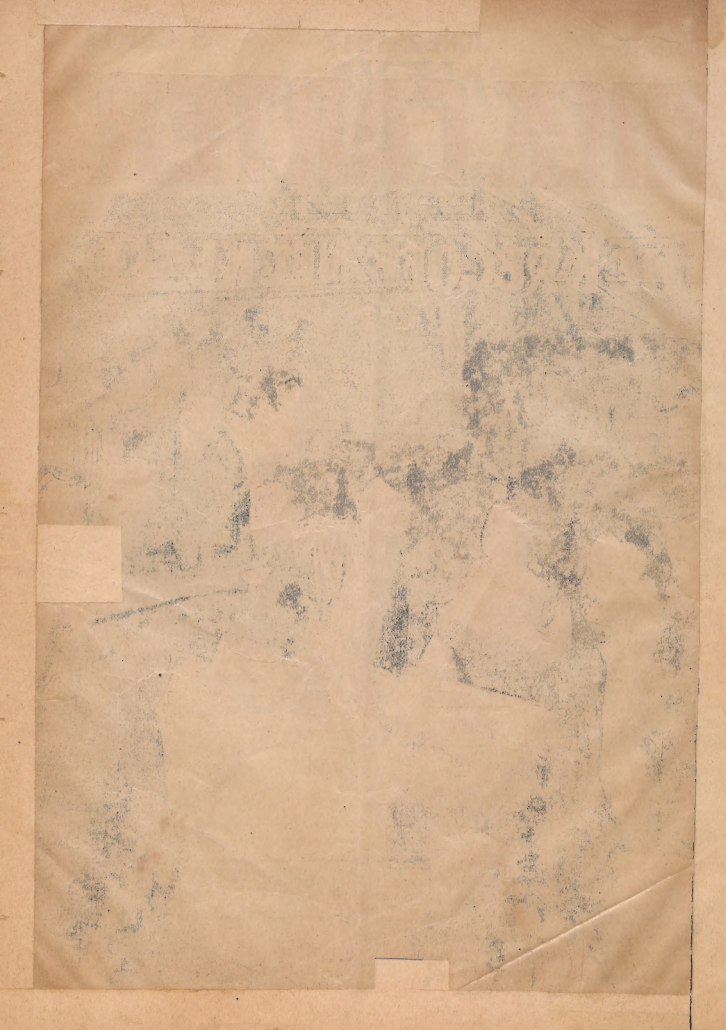
THE KREGOFF NECKLACE



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IT WAS CORINNE CROYDEN WHO BROKE
THE SILENCE AS SHE SPOKE IN A STRANGE
DULL VOICE "READ THE NOTE THAT IS
IN THE PACKAGE WITH THE NECKLACE"

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NICK CARTER

NEW WEEKLY

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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No. 808.

NEW YORK, June 22, 1912.

Price Five Cents.

THE KREGOFF NECKLACE;

Or, NICK CARTER UNEARTH'S A SECRET.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

A THIEF IN THEIR MIDST.

Jack Wise was seated at the table in the banquet hall between his fiancée, Mabel Vaughan, and his cousin, Constance Mills. His friend and chum, Philip Sears, was next to Connie when the thing happened. The banquet hall was at Cherrie's, and the occasion was an exceedingly exclusive affair to which only the people who spelled society with a big S, had been bidden.

Ninety-nine guests sat at the immense horseshoe table, when the beautiful and very rich Madame Duclos created the scene which was to send a shudder shivering down the spines of all present, and to keep many of them in a shiver of apprehension for many a day afterward.

The salad had been served; the hum of voices, the cadences of women's light laughter, the pleasantly modulated tones of the gentlemen, the tinkling of glasses, and the music of silver against silver mingled with the strains of the concealed orchestra, and up to the instant when Madame Duclos leaped to her feet and created the scene, the affair had been literally the most successful of that season.

"I have been robbed—robbed—robbed!" she cried.

Instantly every sound was hushed; even the orchestra ceased its playing.

The cry that madame gave was frantic in its tone. Her manner and attitude as she stretched out her white arms over the table was appealing as well as horror-stricken, and there had been that in her cry, and in the manner of it, which startled every person within that great room into momentary paralysis.

But such a hiatus as that one could endure only for a moment.

Men shoved their chairs away from the table and leaped to their feet. Women started to rise, only to collapse again upon their chairs; one of them who always took advantage of such an occasion, fainted—and instantly had several men bending over her in efforts to revive her.

The seat at the table occupied by Madame Duclos was directly opposite Constance, so Jack Wise and his friends had perhaps about the best and closest view of the occurrence.

The woman's cry had come without warning; it fitted the old and threadbare simile about the thunder-bolt out of a clear sky.

It so happened that she had just made a remark

across the table to Jack, and, therefore, his eyes were upon her when it happened. There were many who claimed that their eyes were also upon her at the time, but it is certain that Jack saw exactly what did happen.

Madame Duclos had turned to her companion at the feast to make some further remark in connection with the one she had just made to Jack, and in doing so she had raised her left hand to touch with her fingers and so readjust the pendant from the magnificent necklace she had worn to that dinner—a necklace which was at once the admiration and the envy of every woman who had seen it or heard about it, on two continents.

The necklace was not there.

If you have ever raised your fingers tentatively to touch your scarf pin, and have found that it was not in its place; you have been proportionately startled, no matter whether the ornament was of great value or small.

The effect of such a discovery is approximately the same, no matter what the value of the missing property may be.

But when—as in that case—the value is inestimable, when the thing itself is beyond price, and when, in addition to the unaccountable sum of dollars it may be worth, you add to it the sentimental value which a woman feels in such a possession when she is assured that there is nothing like it in all the world, you can form some estimate of the effect of that discovery upon Madame Duclos.

At the end of that short hiatus, she cried out again:

"I have been robbed! My necklace has been stolen!"

Women left their chairs and pressed toward her. Men got down, some of them on their hands and knees, to search beneath the table, the instant opinion being that the clasp of the necklace had become loosened, and that it had fallen from her throat.

It was not found.

A moment's search was all that was required to assure the searchers that it had not fallen to the floor.

Some of the women thrust the men back away from her and began to search about her person, believing that still it might have fallen from her, and so become lodged in some part of her attire. They were soon satisfied that it had not.

In the midst of it all, Madame Duclos, who was very greatly excited, and, therefore, not entirely responsible for what she said and did, screamed out:

"Close the doors! Let no one leave this room till my necklace is found!"

For another instant the guests at that dinner were stupefied with amazement.

Here was a direct charge. The first one had been the same, but it had passed unnoticed in that respect, owing to the excitement of the moment; but here, now, was a direct charge to the effect that some person, a guest at that dinner, had stolen the priceless necklace, and was a thief.

It required a second or two of time for this idea to work its way into the understanding of those present; then several of the men moved toward the doors and stood as willing guards over them; the waiters gathered into a group by themselves at one end of the room; a hush of horror that was broken only by whispers and half-toned murmurs such as one hears at funerals, pervaded the room—while the fruitless search went on.

Madame talked volubly all the time, scarce conscious of what she said. Some of her remarks were:

"It has been stolen; stolen, I say. I touched it only a moment ago, and it was safe; now it is gone. Somebody has stolen it. Somebody in this room is a thief. I know it. There are persons here who are comparative strangers to us—several of them. Let them be searched. Let everybody consent to be searched; one man and one woman, particularly; for none of us know who they are, save that they were properly introduced. Oh, that we should have a thief among us! and that my necklace should be stolen!" et cetera, et cetera.

Throughout the scene, Jack Wise sat still, and was watchful.

By a sign to his friends, he compelled them to remain in their seats, also.

Jack knew that at least madame was right in one respect—that the necklace had been in its place, gleaming against her white throat, only a short time before she made the startling announcement—and he was making an effort to remember exactly how recently he had been conscious of it.

Instead of searching the floor and madame's drapery for the necklace, Jack Wise was searching the countenances of those who were present, and near her—of those who had had occasion to be near her during a short interval of time before the discovery of the theft was made.

At the very commencement of the excitement, he had leaned forward and said, in an undertone, to Philip Sears:

"Sit quiet, Phil. Watch out. Watch every person who is near madame, or who approaches her about her loss—men and women—tell me afterward what you see."

In effect, he said the same things to Constance, on his left, and to Mabel, at his right hand—and it happened that those three, his chum, his cousin, and his fiancée, were the only persons present at that function who were aware of his relations with Nick Carter, or who knew that he had lately become a detective.

For this society was his own set. He had been raised in it, and was one with it, as were his three companions.

And he believed, as Madame Duclos did, that the necklace had been stolen.

CHAPTER II.

THE ACCUSED.

The circumstances were such that Jack Wise did not care to have it known that he was really a detective. Of course, it had been vaguely rumored among the people who knew him that he had "gone to work," but the character of the work he was performing was even more vague. He decided then and there to prosecute the search for the stolen jewels, but to do it in a quiet, amateurish manner, without letting it be known that such a quest was directly in the line of the profession he had adopted.

And so, during the first part of the excitement, he sat perfectly still, using only his eyes and his ears, and depending upon the eyes and ears of his immediate companions to supply afterward whatever of detail he might miss.

He made mental note of the names of the persons who were nearest to Madame Duclos at the time of the dénouement, and immediately before it.

Caton Barnaby was her companion at the table. Merle Fanton had been seated at the other side of her. Margaret Tufts was with Fanton, and the woman next to Barnaby was Mrs. Orme Powderly. These four were the only persons who could have reached Madame Duclos with their hands while she was at table, without leaving their chairs to do so.

It seemed utterly beyond the question to consider any one of the four as the likely thief.

Barnaby was a man in the latter half of the forties, distinguished in appearance as well as in reputation. Jack decided that he was not to be considered at all. Fanton—well, Fanton was Merle Fanton, a good fellow, of thirty or so, handsome, sought after, accom-

plished, an acknowledged ladies' man, the supposed possessor of a sufficient income; and he was avowedly in love with the peerless Madame Duclos. Surely he was out of it, too.

Mrs. Orme Powderly, who was next to Barnaby, had devoted her entire attention to her escort, and Jack did not remember that she had turned her attention once to Barnaby. He was sure that she had not bent over in that direction, and had not reached out toward Madame Duclos during the dinner.

Margaret Tufts had had eyes only for Fanton. She was also the daughter of a multimillionaire, and owned more jewels, and wore more, too, than Madame Duclos. True, she had nothing as valuable in itself as the necklace, but neither had any other woman there, for that matter; anyhow, it was unthinkable that Margaret Tufts could have stolen them.

One's attention is always drawn to the servants when a theft occurs in a place like that, and for that very reason they are the least likely to be guilty. They know that if anything is lost, they will be suspected, and it is a rare thing indeed that one will take the property of a guest on such an occasion.

But there was still another reason why Jack did not think that a waiter had stolen the necklace. It was this:

Notwithstanding the great, almost inestimable value of the necklace and pendant, it would be as worthless as so much glass to a thief, for the very good reason that it could not be disposed of without discovery.

It had a history. Every stone in the collection that created it, had a history and a record of its own, and was known the world over among dealers. If you should make mention of the Kregoff necklace and pendant in London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, or Bombay, or in any part of the world, the response would be something like this:

"Ah, yes! It is a wonderful creation, isn't it? It is owned by Madame Duclos, of New York. If she should put it up at auction, how the collectors would flock to it. She could get millions for it." Et cetera, et cetera.

So Jack at once dismissed from his mind the idea that any of the servants had taken it; and he accepted at the same time the theory that the motive for the theft had been envy.

Envy, not the value of the ornament. Just plain envy, for the person who stole it could not wear it. The only possible effect of stealing it would be to deprive Madame Duclos of the glory of owning it and decking herself with it.

And Jack was positive that the madame had not been deprived of it until a very few moments before she had given the alarm.

Meantime, the accusation made by Madame Duclos was ringing in the ears of every person in that room; particularly that part of the accusation in which she had said:

"Let everybody consent to be searched; but one man and one woman particularly; for none of us know who they are save that they were properly introduced. Oh, that we should have a thief among us!"

So much of what madame had said, at least, had settled upon the consciousness of all.

For an instant of time every pair of eyes in the room glanced in the direction of the two whom madame had signaled out for her accusation; and the two, the man and the woman thus thrust into such an unenviable spotlight, flushed and grew pale and flushed again by turns, conscious that the sting of the hastily spoken words might cling to them forever.

Oddly enough, too, they had been strangers to each other until the beginning of that function. It was generally understood that they had met that evening for the first time in their lives.

The guests knew them merely as Mr. Manchester and Miss Croydon.

Jack Wise's eyes sought them with the others when the accusation was made. He asked himself, as doubtless did all the others, if there was any hidden reason why madame should direct attention so plainly to those two—any reason other than the one she had given, namely, that they were strangers to all who were there; that they had become dinner guests with the others merely upon introduction by two others who were present and who were of the party.

He had not been personally presented to them. The introduction had been general.

The maxim that "under the roof is an introduction," was rather generally practiced at functions given by that hostess, and the mere fact that this particular dinner was given at Cherrie's instead of at her own paternal mansion, on Fifth Avenue, was only because an incipient fire had wrecked the dining room in her own home after the invitations were sent out.

But Jack made no move to leave his seat.

Like the others, he had arisen for a moment; but he had sat down again, and he had told his three immediate companions to do the same.

The arrangements at the table were such that Phil Sears was seated next to Miss Croydon, and during the dinner he had naturally exchanged some words

with her; and she had been taken in by the other stranger, Mr. Manchester.

It seemed to Jack that it was manifestly impossible that either of them could have taken the necklace, had either of them been so disposed. He was certain that they had not left their seats since the dinner began; it was impossible that either should have reached across the table and taken the jewels; it was next to impossible that either of them could have secured the ornament from the floor, if it had been dropped there during the meal by its owner.

The situation was a puzzling one.

It was certain, however, that Madame Duclos had worn the necklace; that she was not wearing it then; that it could not be found on the floor or on the table, or anywhere upon her person; that it had either fallen from its place around her throat, or that it had been unclasped and stolen—and even if it had fallen, it had been picked up by somebody, and kept.

So much was certain. But where was it?

When the accusation was made which drew every eye in the room toward the two persons who have been named, two others moved hastily toward them from opposite ends of the table; they were Mrs. Humphrey and Miss Christy, the one sponsor for Mr. George Manchester; the other sponsor for Miss Corinne Croydon—and both were, in their respective ways, powerful members and responsible leaders in that "set."

And they were almost as angry about the accusation as the two who were accused were hurt, mortified, and furious.

They were loud in their protestations concerning what Madame Duclos had said, and they did not mince words in stating their opinions.

There were others in the room who also rushed toward them to sympathize and to express their entire confidence and belief in the two—and there were others who drew backward and aside with much lifting of eyebrows and with many shrugs.

CHAPTER III.

THE LAST WORD.

All that has been described here took place in a very little time.

Things like that happen, groups form, disintegrate, and reform with kaleidoscopic swiftness on such occasions; and so it was that, within a very short while, the entire party had resolved itself into three groups: Those who distinctly sympathized with Mr. Manchester and Miss Croydon; those who were willing to look

askance upon them merely because the accusation had been made and who preferred to wait until something definite had been determined before forming an opinion; and those who were still conducting a search.

Certain men of the party, in obedience to the request of Madame Duclos, had stationed themselves at the doors to see that nobody entered or left the room.

There was a buzz of conversation here, a murmur of voices there, exclamations and ejaculations from the Duclos woman, and the atmosphere of the room was surcharged with an excitement greater than any that "society" had known for a long time.

Then a fourth group formed itself out of one of the three.

Mr. Manchester and Miss Croydon, having a mutual interest in what was going on, drew aside from the rest, and stood apart, but together, for a moment. Mrs. Humphrey and Miss Christy, their sponsors, followed them—and gradually every pair of eyes in the room sought them; then silence fell upon them all.

Manchester, a tall, dark, handsome man, less than thirty years old, spoke a few words in a low tone to his companions, and Mrs. Humphrey and Miss Christy rejoined that other group that they had left.

Then Manchester raised his head and slowly surveyed the company which he had met that night for the first time.

"I would like your close attention for a moment," he said coolly. "Madame Duclos, which I am told is the name of the woman who has suffered the loss of some valuable jewels, has been somewhat precipitate in making accusations. Miss Croydon and I have been made the victims of her hasty act. Madame Duclos' condition of mind as a consequence of her loss may be explained, but I do not think it can be entirely excused.

"Miss Croydon and I stand in precisely the same category, so far as you are concerned. We are both utter strangers to all of you, scarcely better known to the two estimable ladies who introduced us, than to any of you. I was assigned as her dinner companion, and I am now very glad indeed that it was so arranged.

"I came to this city last night from the West. I brought with me the card of an old-time acquaintance and friend of Mrs. Humphrey, who desired that I should make myself known to her without delay. I did so. To-day I received a note from her, delivered by messenger, requesting my attendance here to-night in order—I quote from her message now: 'To make it possible that a Miss Croydon, who is a friend of

Miss Christy's, might attend the dinner, also, and be provided with a companion.' I may add that I met Miss Christy at Mrs. Humphrey's house when I called there last night.

"Now I will speak for Miss Croydon, as she has asked me to do so. She is scarcely better known to Miss Christy than I am to Mrs. Humphrey. She arrived in the city quite recently, and Miss Christy received a letter at about the same time in which she was asked to call upon Miss Croydon. The letter was written by a mutual friend, who is exceedingly well known to both of them. Miss Christy saw, in this function, an opportunity to present Miss Croydon to all of you, and in meeting me last night at Mrs. Humphrey's, a ready means of doing so. The two ladies communicated with your hostess for the necessary permission, and we are here. Please understand that Miss Croydon and I have not met until this evening."

He turned toward her for an instant, then restored his attention to the roomful, and added:

"I have just this much more to say: I think that Miss Croydon and I have become better friends within the last ten minutes than ten years of casual acquaintance might otherwise have rendered us. We are both quite willing to be searched. We feel like insisting upon it that we be searched for the missing jewels. But we both insist, and we shall adhere to it, that we be not searched for the missing necklace until every other person in this room has first undergone that ordeal."

A gasp of amazement sounded from nearly every woman in that room.

"By Jove!" said Phil Sears to Jack, speaking in an undertone. "That was a crackajack proposition." Since nobody was seated at table now, Jack and his friends had joined the group that was supposed to sympathize with the accused persons.

Jack Wise nodded. He made no reply in words. He was absorbed by his contemplation of the scene. Mabel bent toward him and whispered:

"It is an outrage, Jack, to suppose that either of those two is a thief."

He nodded again, scarcely hearing what she said. Then Connie Mills whispered to him:

"How utterly absurd it all is, Jack!"

Once more he nodded.

The whole thing was absurd in many ways; tragic in others.

It was a safe proposition that Madame Duclos had not stolen her own necklace; it was an unquestionable fact that the jewels were missing; it was a certainty

that they were in the room—unless one of the waiters had carried them out, and that was not likely; at least, Jack Wise did not regard it as likely.

Madame Duclos bent slightly forward, her eyes fixed upon Manchester. There was a moment of silence, for everybody knew that she was on the point of saying something, and all could see that she was hesitating in order thoroughly to control herself and to make careful selection of her words.

"I will claim the attention of the company, for a moment," she said at last. "The Kregoff necklace is known and admired all the way around the world. It is known to be my property all the way around the world. Every stone that is comprised in its make-up is as well known as the necklace itself. Not one of them could be disposed of to any dealer, or any lapidary in the world, without instant detection. Every diamond is as yellow as any topaz, and as flawless, as pure and as hard as the bluest of diamonds. Not one of them could be recut without the instant knowledge that it was a stone from the famous Kregoff necklace."

She glanced around her for approval of that statement, and was met by a murmur of assent. She went on:

"There have been many attempts to steal the necklace from me. A recital of them would make astounding reading. No sensational detective story of the day could compare with such a tale.

"But why have such attempts been made if the stones could not be sold, if the necklace could not be worn, and if it could not even be shown in a collection? I will tell you—that is, I will explain it to you as it has been explained to me at one time and another by the three greatest detectives in the world; explained to me by them because I took the trouble to seek them out and ask their opinions.

"Monsieur Goureau, recently the chief of the secret police of the city of Paris; Inspector McNaughton, the acknowledged jewel expert of Scotland Yard, in London; and our own well-known Nicholas Carter, of New York, who has just returned from a trip abroad—a trip involving the recovery of a stolen crown jewel destined for the queen of Roumelia—these three constitute my authority.

"Cupidity, or envy, would be the motive for such a theft. A common thief will never attempt to steal the necklace—unless he be a very common thief indeed. If it is ever taken from you, it will be because of the mere desire to possess it in secret; or it will be because of the wish to deprive you of it."

She paused for an instant, and then addressed Manchester and Miss Croydon more directly, and almost as if they were one person.

"I do not charge you, or either of you, with the theft of my necklace. I do not charge any person in this room with it. But I do charge that it has been taken by, and is now in the possession of, some person who is now inside of this room. The necklace has been worn by me many times in the presence of every person who is here now, except you two; and so, I submit to all who are present, that, under the circumstances, it is only right and proper that you should be searched before the others."

"We utterly refuse to submit to such an indignity, Madame Duclos," Manchester replied coolly. "Miss Croydon must be searched last. I will submit to the indignity immediately before she does so. That is her last word on the subject—and mine."

CHAPTER IV.

THE MYSTERY DEEPENS.

Two hours later.

"Button, button, who's got the button?" said Phil Sears, laughing outright. "Gee whiz, Jack! I know now what it means to feel like a thief—and it isn't pleasant. I sure did feel like one while that committee was going through my clothes like fire through an oil factory. But—button, button, who's got the button? You guess."

"The taste of it all is in my mouth yet," said Constance, making a wry face.

"It was a fairly good dinner—what we got of it," admitted Sears.

"Oh, bother!" was Constance's reply.

They were still at Cherrie's, still in the room where the banquet had been laid; but they were on the point of leaving, and they were among the last to take their departure.

The search had been thorough. Nobody had escaped it, and Madame Duclos had, herself, been the first one to submit to it.

A committee of the men had first searched each other and had then called in those who remained, one by one; with the women it had been the same.

Manchester had steadfastly declined to be searched until the very last of all the men, and Miss Croydon had stuck to her attitude in that respect in regard to the searching of the women.

The waiters had been served in the same manner; nobody had escaped.

But the necklace had not been recovered, nor had any trace of it been found.

Then, one by one and two by two, the party had broken up. Nobody cared to remain, and the hostess, whose name we have purposely omitted, was in despair. Now, when Philip Sears made his facetious remark about the old child's game of button, button, there still remained in that dining room only the hostess, Madame Duclos, Jack Wise, and his friends, the Mr. Manchester, who had taken such a prominent part in the affair—and Miss Croydon, who was in the act of leaving at that moment, in the company of her friend and sponsor, Miss Christy. Miss Christy, it should be said, was a very beautiful and a very rich maiden lady of thirty-seven summers and winters, and who delighted in boasting of all thirty-seven of them because she looked fifteen years younger than she was, and could afford to do so. And this statement sufficiently reveals her character, which was altogether as charming as her person.

Madame Duclos moved forward quickly, as Miss Croydon was about to depart.

"I hope, Miss Croydon, that you will not cherish ill will against me for what has happened here to-night," she said. "I deeply regret it all."

She half extended one hand, but Miss Croydon did not "see" it. Instead, she bowed her head coldly, made no response in words, and passed from the room.

Manchester was on the point of going, also, when Jack moved toward him quickly.

"Mr. Manchester, before you go I would like to tell you that I heartily approve of the attitude you assumed here to-night," he said. "You were in an exceedingly difficult position. I think you met it splendidly."

"Thank you. You are Mr.——" he hesitated.

"Mr. Jack Wise. I give the name in that way from force of habit," Jack replied, with a smile: "This is my friend Mr. Sears. The ladies you have met."

"Oh, yes; and Mr. Sears, also. He sat next to Miss Croydon. What a charming person she is!"

"The entire situation looks to me as though it ought to be a very good beginning for a romance," said Phil, laughing.

"I don't think I would hesitate to make it one, so far as I am personally concerned," was the quick reply. Then, with another of his smiles, he turned to Jack again, and added: "I noticed you during the heat of the scene. I noticed that you were observing things rather closely. I was trying to do the same. It is a great mysery, isn't it? What could have become of

the necklace? Have you any opinion about it, Mr. Wise?"

"I'm afraid not. I wish I had," Jack replied.

"Don't you think it's rather odd that Madame Duclos should so absolutely have declined to have the police authorities called into the matter?"

"No. They would have been entirely helpless—as we were. They could have done no more than we did."

"Still, their trained intelligence might have discovered the thief—for thief there must have been, somewhere."

"Their trained intelligence, Mr. Manchester, does not extend to parties of this character."

"Just what do you mean by that remark?"

"That they would have decided at once that the persons who were known to all the others present, were out of it, and that, therefore, you and Miss Croydon were the only logical suspects."

"Oh!"

"You'd have been a real Mister In-bad Manchester, in that case," Sears said, laughing.

"I shouldn't have minded. Personally, I'd have preferred to have the police take full charge of it, from the start. As it stands now, it leaves a bad taste in everybody's mouth. Everybody was looking askance at everybody else when the searching was finished. Nobody suspected anybody, but everybody suspected somebody without knowing whichbody."

"Would you mind saying that over again and saying it slowly?" laughed Jack. "Did you believe, when the search began, that the necklace would be found?"

"Frankly, Mr. Wise, I did."

"Where?"

"That is hardly a fair question, is it?"

"I think it is—under the circumstances."

"Very well, then: I thought—I really did think—that the necklace would be found in the possession of its owner."

Jack was thoughtful.

"It was the most likely place to find it, under the circumstances, and judged from your standpoint, Manchester," he said presently. "But you have not the advantage of knowing Madame Duclos, as all the rest of us, except Miss Croydon, know her."

"I may be perhaps excused for the statement that I have no desire, now, to earn a diploma in that respect," was the cool reply.

"Nor can anybody blame you for holding to that opinion," Jack replied quickly. "You are appropri-

ately offended. Nevertheless, I must take this opportunity to say a word in her behalf: She is one of the most kindly disposed persons I know. She is most gracious and considerate of others, always. But she is excitable, and that necklace is—was—her dearest possession. Nevertheless, I believe that I state no more than the truth when I assure you that she is suffering more acutely right now for the pain she has caused you and Miss Croydon, than for the loss of her necklace. I was very sorry that Miss Croydon could not accept her proffered apology."

"Do you blame her?"

"Yes. At least, I think she might have been somewhat more gracious about it."

"Madame did not make the same advance to me, Mr. Wise."

"No. The rebuff she had already received frightened her. Will you accept an apology from me, for her, when I tell you that I know whereof I speak?"

"She is still present in the room. She could make one herself if she cared to do so, Mr. Wise."

"And she is coming this way even now, sir," Jack said, perceiving her.

And it was so. She came up quickly, with her right hand extended. Her face was flushed and there was a suspicion of moisture in her eyes as she said:

"Mr. Manchester, at the risk of another rebuff, I must tell you how sorry I am. Will you forgive me?"

"Gladly, madame; and honestly. I think I understand, now, better than I did before. I am very sorry for you; believe me."

It was earnestly said, and beautifully, too. Manchester won a considerable distance in the estimation of Jack Wise at that moment.

"I feel like a culprit myself," Madame Duclos continued. "As if I were the guilty one, because I have dared to lose my necklace."

"And, madame," said Manchester, "I will confess, too. I believed, at the start, that you were the guilty one, even more than you could have suspected me. So now we are quits. And I suggest that we organize right here with a view to recovering the lost necklace."

CHAPTER V.

THE SAFETY DEVICE.

Jack Wise had been longing for the opportunity that now offered itself unsought. As if to render it all the more promising, Miss Tufts reentered the room at that moment, accompanied by Barnaby and Fanton. It will be remembered that these two men were the

nearest to Madame Duclos at the table, and that Miss Tufts was seated next to Fanton.

Jack asked them to join the group.

"We will begin the preliminary investigation according to the suggestion of Mr. Manchester; right here and now, with your permission," he said, addressing them all. "I will volunteer to take the charge of it. Are we agreed?"

They were, and so signified heartily.

"Mrs. Powderly, who sat next to Barnaby, and Judge Compton, who was next to her, are the only absentees among those nearest to Madame Duclos, at that side of the table. Madame was between Barnaby and Fanton and Miss Tufts was next to Fanton. Of those on the opposite side of the table, Miss Croydon is the only one absent. She was between Phil Sears and Manchester. Now! Madame, when was the last moment that you are positive the necklace was in its place?"

"Oh, I don't know. I really don't. I have tried to remember, but I cannot. I am in the habit, always when I wear it, of feeling for it continually. The act of doing so has become a subconscious one. But I cannot remember the last time I noticed that it was there. I am only sure about the moment when I missed it."

"Exactly. That is what I expected you to say. Now Connie, you were very nearly opposite madame. What have you to say concerning it?"

"Only this, Jack: To-night was the first time I have seen the necklace, although I had heard about it. For a time I could not keep my eyes away from it. Then Phil and I became interested in—"

"In each other, Connie," Phil interrupted her; and she went on demurely:

"In each other, and I think I forgot all about it. Still, I am quite sure that I had been staring at madame for a moment or two, conscious of the fact that the necklace was gone, when she cried out about it."

"Thank you. Mabel, you were at the other side of me from Connie. What have you to tell us?"

"Not a single thing, Jack. I hadn't the least idea about the necklace or its disappearance until madame gave the alarm. I was just conscious that the room was filled with people, and a little bit surprised that I was one of them, I think."

"Phil, it is your turn."

"With due apologies to Madame Duclos, I cannot say whether she wore a diamond necklace, or one made of emeralds. I was interested, too, the same as Con-

nie was—and I was trying my level best to be polite to Miss Croydon at the same time."

"What do you say, Mr. Manchester?"

"Practically the same as the others. I did see and admire the necklace at the beginning of the dinner; but, later, I forgot it entirely. I was only reminded of it when the alarm was given."

"Now, Barnaby?"

"I took madame in, as you all now. At first we discussed the necklace. I think I told her how much I admired it, and how becoming it was, and all that sort of thing. But I think it must have been nearly a minute before she missed it when I discovered its absence. She was talking to me, and I was waiting only for her to complete what she was saying, to speak about it, when she put up her hand and found that it was not in place. Just before that I had been talking across the table to Miss Croydon, and so the necklace might easily have been missing for several minutes before I discovered the fact."

"Fanton, what can you say about it?" was Jack's next question.

"Upon my word, Jack, I haven't a thing to say. I don't even remember that I noticed the necklace itself, particularly. I certainly don't remember when I missed it, if I did miss it, and I don't think I did at all."

"Now, Miss Tuffts?"

"Tom Green was next to me," she replied. "He was telling me one of his endless and alleged funny stories, and I had to be polite. That is all I can say."

"Now it is your turn, Jack," said Sears.

"Yes," Jack replied. "I would like to ask Madame Duclos a few questions."

"Certainly, Mr. Wise. What are they?" she asked.

"Will you describe the clasp, or catch, or whatever you call it, with which the necklace was fastened?"

"Why, yes. It is different from any other that I ever saw, Mr. West. There is a gold link, or ring, and when I adjust the necklace I pass a hook through that ring, and there is a safety device not unlike those that the gentlemen use on their stickpins, which holds it in place after it is adjusted. I have never known it to become unfastened in all the time I have worn the necklace, and I still do not think it possible."

"But, on the other hand, could any person have unfastened the catch of the necklace while it was about your neck without your knowledge, do you think?"

"I think that if I were asleep, such an effort on the part of another person would awaken me."

"You looked at yourself in a mirror before you took your place at the table, did you not? Women usually do that, I believe."

"I think I did so."

"Are you positive that the necklace was in place then?"

"Absolutely so."

"Are you equally positive that it was in place at any time after you were seated at the table?"

"Yes; as positive as I could be made to feel by the sense of touch."

"Then, if it dropped off of its own accord while you were at the table, we are to conclude that the catch had been broken without your knowledge, but that it held in place so that you did not notice the fact when you last adjusted it; or that, when it was adjusted the last time, the safety device was not properly fastened upon the hook of the catch, and that it came loose afterward?"

"I suppose so."

"When did you last adjust the necklace, and where?"

"Why, in the room where we all went to leave our wraps and things, before entering the dining room."

"You took the necklace off while you were there?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Oh, everybody was admiring it. They always do. I am quite accustomed to that sort of thing. I took it off to show it to the ladies."

"To what ladies? To whom?"

"To all of them who were there at the time."

"Can you remember who took it into their hands to examine it?"

"No; several of the ladies did that; and now that I think of it, and to do her full justice, I will add that Miss Croydon was there then, and that she did not take the necklace into her hands at all."

"Indeed? Who readjusted it for you?"

"I did it myself."

"Did no one assist you in doing that?"

"Why, yes—and no, too. One of the links got out of place; it was not exactly a kink, but something like that, you know. I was trying to arrange it as I was about to leave the room, and I think I said to Miss Crowdon, 'My dear, will you straighten that out for me?' It was a perfectly natural thing to do, and quite as natural that she should perform the slight service. That was all there was to that. I stepped to the mirror again to make sure that it was all right, and, in

doing so, felt to see that the catch was in place—and it was, with the safety device over it.”

“Does the safety device fasten on with a screw, or by a spring?”

“It is a screw.”

“Did you go directly from that room to the presence of the general company, madame? Did you stop somewhere on the way?” was Jack’s next question.

CHAPTER VI.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE MOTIVES.

Madame Duclos flushed hotly when Jack Wise asked that question. Then she replied, and without apparent hesitation:

“I encountered Merle Fanton, and we talked together for a moment, aside, before we joined the others. I—perhaps he will tell you about it if you ask him. It has nothing whatever to do with this inquiry.”

“Pardon me, madame,” said Jack smoothly, “everything that happened in this house to-night has something to do with the inquiry. Every person who was here has been thoroughly searched. As we have all gone through with that ordeal, we cannot hesitate over trifling matters. Mr. Fanton is as much under suspicion as Mr. Manchester is; I am as deeply in the mire as they are. So are you. We must not neglect a single incident, however immaterial it may appear to be. So, where did you step aside in order to talk with Mr. Fanton for a moment alone?”

“We went into the Navaho room for a moment only,” she replied, still flushing, as if the subject were an unpleasant one.

“Did Fanton have occasion to touch your necklace; all while you were there with him, madame?”

“Oh, I don’t know. You must ask him,” she exclaimed.

“You answer, Fanton,” Jack said to the man who stood beside her. “Did you touch the necklace while you were in the Navaho room with Madame Duclos?”

“I might have done so; I’m not at all sure whether I did or not,” was the reply, given with a slow smile.

“That is scarcely an answer to my question.”

“It is the best one I can make.”

“Then you will have to enlighten me as to what you did do, while there, which makes you so uncertain in your conclusions.”

“I proposed to Madame Duclos. I asked her to marry me. I always do it whenever there is an opportunity, and to-night happened to be the thirty-first

opportunity that has occurred since the beginning; and I took my thirty-first refusal. I am rather proud of my efforts to gain her consent, and I mean to succeed yet. Now you know.”

“But that doesn’t explain——”

“No, it doesn’t. This will: The Navaho room is small and cozy. All those red blankets around it make it just the place for that sort of thing. I was more insistent than usual, and more in love than ever, if you will have it. I am not sure that I did touch the necklace, but if I did so, it was with my lips—and I could scarcely unclasp the thing with them, could I?”

“I think that is quite horrid of you, Merle,” said madame. Then she raised her eyes and her head at the same time, and she took a step nearer to Fanton, reaching out one hand toward him as she did so. Then she added, addressing them all: “Since you know all about it, and because I wish to show my full confidence in Mr. Fanton, I will change the terms of that last interview between us, in the Navaho room, and say yes.”

“Well, by Jove!” Fanton exclaimed. “I—— Come on back to the Navaho room, Elise. Never mind the necklace! I want to see you alone for a moment. Barnaby, what do you think of that? Jack, you seem to have suddenly developed into a detective, and you’ve got so much money of your own that you don’t need any of mine; but, all the same, if you will find that necklace and return it to Madame Duclos, you’ll earn my eternal gratitude.”

“I’ll find it,” Jack replied quietly. “And I’ll return it to madame, too.”

“And I’ll help you,” said Phil Sears.

“I will help, also, if I may,” Manchester remarked.

“I won’t,” said Barnaby. “I’ll look on. Madame Duclos, I cannot congratulate you quite as heartily as I do Merle, but I do congratulate you both. As for the necklace, I am extremely sorry about that. I wish I could help in the search for it. Somehow, I doubt if it ever will be found. My private opinion is that one of those waiters got away with it and dropped it out of sight somewhere, and now he will be so frightened by the consequences of what he has done that you will never see it again. That is the best that I can offer you. I’m going to say good night.”

* * * * *

Notwithstanding the early hour at which the dinner party broke up, it was nearly two o’clock in the morning when Jack Wise entered Nick Carter’s house and started to ascend the stairs toward his own room.

—for Jack lived in the great detective's house, then, and had become the regularly accredited third assistant.

To his surprise, there was the glimmer of a light beyond the door of the detective's study, and he paused for a moment, then tapped lightly upon it. He had not expected the chief to be at home for several days yet.

But a voice bade him enter, and he found Nick Carter at his desk inside. Nick rose to greet him with extended hand.

"Hello, Jack!" he said. "I'm glad to see you again. I got in from England half an hour ago, and several days sooner than I had expected—after finding the crown diamond for the queen of Roumelia. Sit down. You've got something on your mind."

"You just bet I have, chief!" Jack replied. Like the rest of the household, with the single exception of Chick, Jack had grown into the habit of addressing the detective as chief.

"Well, what is it?—if you're not too tired to tell me about it."

"You have heard of the Kregoff necklace, haven't you, chief?"

"Yes. Who has not? Has it been stolen at last?"

"It certainly has; very much stolen, in fact."

"Good! I'm rather glad of it."

"Eh? Why? For goodness' sake, why?"

"Chiefly because it will afford you very good practice to find it, Jack. Madame Duclos, as she likes to be called, will send down here after me in the morning, to find her necklace for her. I shall turn the case over to you. There you are."

"But, I say, won't you help any?"

"I shall merely make some suggestions. I'll suggest something right now, before you have told me a thing about the circumstances."

"I don't think I understand you at all, chief."

"You will in a moment. In the first place, that necklace cannot get very far away from the place where it disappeared. I mean by that, that one of the persons who were present when the necklace was missed, must carry it, if it does go far away. And persons are always easily followed."

"In the second place, if the necklace was really stolen, it is almost certain that a woman took it; or, if a man took it, he did so because a woman asked him to do it, and made it the price of something that he wanted of her—her hand in marriage, for instance."

"Oh, come, chief, you're making game of me."

"No, I'm not. I'm in earnest."

"Then what is it?"

"If you had stolen that necklace, and should take it to a lapidary, or a jeweler, or a pawnbroker, or the keeper of a 'fence,' and try to dispose of it, you'd get laughed at, first, and then arrested. It is utterly worthless, unless it should be legitimately sold, in which case it would possess entirely a fictitious value. I've no doubt that Morgan would give two or three millions for it. I'm quite sure that some of the rich women of the city would give that much, or more."

"But where am I to look for it, if I am to be assigned to the case?" Jack asked.

"Why do you ask that? You have begun looking for it already, or I don't know you."

"I guess that's right, too."

"Jack, if the Kregoff necklace has really been stolen, there is only one of two motives only behind the theft. Understand?"

"Yes."

"One is negative, the other is positive. It was stolen only because there is a woman somewhere who could not bear the thought that another woman should have it and wear it, and so she has deprived Madame Duclos of it. Oh, it was stolen only because, somewhere, there is a woman who merely wanted to possess it in order that she might lock herself up alone with it and gloat over it for hours at a time, in utter solitude. Anyhow, you will find it, sooner or later."

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE MORNING AT CHERRIE'S

Morning developed the fact that Nick Carter had been correct in his prognostication relative to a summons for him sent by Madame Duclos. It arrived while he was at the breakfast table and showed that she had written it immediately upon her return from Cherrie's.

It recited briefly the facts as Jack had already related them, and Nick, after reading the letter through, tossed it across to his new assistant, and, as he arose to leave the table, he said:

"It is your assignment, Jack. You may report to her in person and explain your relations with me, if you like, or you may have Joseph inform her butler over the wire that I have received her letter and will accept the commission, reporting to her as soon as there is something definite to report. In other words, you may do your work under cover, or in the open, as you please."

The detective stepped toward the door on his way

out of the room, but paused there for an instant to add:

"I will make one more suggestion. Don't waste your time upon any theory that the necklace was stolen by a waiter or a servant. The thief was seated at the table with you, and, I imagine, not very far away from you."

Everybody in Nick Carter's household was an early riser. Things began to move and the "wheels to go 'round," in good season at Nick Carter's house; and, although Jack had not gone to bed till after three, he felt as bright and energetic as if he had had full eight hours sleep.

One thing to which he had been accustomed at his home at Wisecres, he still adhered to in his new home, and that was a ride in the saddle in the early morning. So he went out soon after Nick Carter had gone, and took his way to the stable where he kept his horse.

It was a cool, crisp, bright morning; one of the bracing sort when a person is glad to be alive and capable of enjoyment, and by the time Jack turned into the park at Fifth Avenue and Fifty-ninth Street, he was feeling splendidly.

"There are just two things which I must determine in my own mind, and to my own satisfaction, before I can make any progress at all in this matter," he told himself, as he guided his mount into the bridle path and urged it to a swifter pace. "The most important one is that I must determine where the thief could have concealed the necklace so that it was not found when the searches were made. By Jove!" He pulled his pony to a standstill and hesitated, during a full minute, after which, with a shake of his head, he started on again.

"It's too early in the morning to go to Cherrie's," he mused. "I'll stop there on my way back. All the same, it's a cinch that the necklace was not concealed upon the person of anybody in that room. And so it must have been hidden all the time in the room itself. Confound it! if the chief had been present, he would have thought of that. Now, maybe it's too late."

The horse was going at a walk. Hearing the thud of rapidly approaching hoofs from behind him, Jack pulled to one side. Not feeling any special curiosity concerning the identity of the other rider, he did not look up until the other horse had swept past him at a free canter.

A second horse, ridden by a groom, was passing then, but as Jack Wise's eyes encountered the figure of the first rider, he started, then sat straight up in his

saddle, after which he urged his own mount to a swifter pace.

The lady was riding easily, like a person who has been all her life accustomed to the saddle. He had never seen her but on the one occasion, but he had no doubts as to her identity.

"Miss Croydon; Corinne Croydon," he told himself quickly. "This is certainly a bit of luck."

Jack's first impulse was to gallop forward, overtake the young woman, and ride beside her if she would accept his company. He felt that a general discussion with her of the incidents of the preceding night, might be enlightening. For he had admired her greatly for the manner in which she had comported herself during the trying scenes at the dinner, and after it.

Moreover, she was undeniably beautiful, and not above three or four years Jack's senior; and what young man of nineteen is there who is not strangely attracted by a woman who is a few years older than himself.

Beyond a few commonplaces, Jack had barely conversed with her at the dinner where so much that was unpleasant had happened; but he had admired her none the less; he had perhaps acknowledged her charm all the more—and he was wise enough to appreciate the fact that a young woman, such as she was, has eyes in her head to see with, and that she does see a very great deal that will escape a man.

But she was riding rapidly, so that her groom was having his work cut out for him to keep up, and Jack could not overtake Corinne Croydon just then without making too much of a point of it; so he resolved to linger in the background, but to keep her in sight, nevertheless, until a better opportunity should offer.

Several times he lost sight of her entirely around some bend in the bridle path; and twice, of the groom also, who kept at a respectful distance behind her. Then, on the last occasion of this sort, Jack rounded a turn in the path to come upon the groom where he had halted his horse, in doubt which way to go to overtake his mistress.

It was where the bridle path crossed the driveway in such a manner that it necessitated a turn up the driveway itself for some distance. Jack, knowing the way, rode onward, thus guiding the groom upon his proper course but without appearing to know that he was doing so.

He entered upon the bridle path again at the opposite side of the road, presently, and there the groom has-

tened the pace of his horse and passed; and again Jack took up the chase as he had done before.

But, although he kept the groom in sight, he did not again overtake Corinne Croydon; and while he was greatly disappointed, he could not help chuckling to himself when at last he came upon the groom again where he had stopped at an intersection, evidently to consider again which way he should turn in order to discover his mistress.

"I should suppose that Miss Graydon has played an old and threadbare trick upon her groom, to rid herself of him, if I knew her well enough to suppose that she had an appointment to meet somebody in the park," he told himself. "Anyhow, she has given me the slip, as well as the groom."

Instead of crossing the driveway and continuing along the bridle path, he turned down it, riding slowly, his mind again upon the possibility that the stolen necklace was still hidden somewhere in the banquet room at Cherrie's.

"There is just this much that I feel certain about," was the substance of his thought, as he moved along. He released the bridle rein long enough to tack the ideas off upon his fingers:

"One, the theft of the necklace was planned and the entire operation of it arranged, days before that dinner was given. Two, the method of taking it from the neck of Madame Duclos had been carefully considered, and with the exactness of detail that an acrobat uses in his tumbling acts. Three, the possibility of a search for the lost necklace was anticipated, and its hiding place was arranged for during that search, where it would not be discovered, and where it might, if necessary, be left overnight without great danger of its discovery. Four, not one of the guests at that dinner table, unless it were Madame Duclos herself, would dare to present himself or herself at Cherrie's this morning to search for it, because everybody is more or less under suspicion by everybody else. Certainly no woman, who was a member of that party, could supply an adequate excuse for appearing there this morning to search for the lost article; and fifth, I happen to know of one man who will do that very thing, and his name is Jack Wise."

So he left the park, rode down the avenue, and dismounted at Cherrie's door and went inside, under the pretense that he had not breakfasted, and had come there to do so. He stopped at the desk to give his order, so that it might be made ready for him while he was washing up after his ride in the park; and he

glanced over the top of his card into the breakfast room while he was ordering.

Something that he saw there in that breakfast room astounded him so that he forgot what he was engaged in doing. He continued for a time to stare over the top of the card.

CHAPTER VIII.

THREE SHARP POINTS NEARER.

The day manager of the place, who happened personally to be attending to Jack's wants at the moment, fortunately had his attention distracted at that time and did not see the start that Jack Wise gave when he made his discovery; and yet it was not one of such great import, after all. It was a circumstance that might well have happened in the most casual and accidental way; yet it was a coincident, and Jack was interested.

What he saw when he glanced across the top of the card was this:

Merle Fanton was crossing the breakfast room from another part of it, toward a table at which Miss Corinne Croydon was seated. He appeared to greet her as if the meeting was a surprise, and she acknowledged his salutations in the most conventional manner.

That was all there was to it.

It was not at all surprising that Fanton should be breakfasting there, since he practically lived there, and had done so for several years. He breakfasted at Cherrie's every morning of his life, when in town. But it was a fact that he rarely appeared at table before noon, or very near it. This morning it was only shortly after eight o'clock.

Again, it was a perfectly natural thing that Miss Croydon should go there, too, for her breakfast after her ride in the park. Lots of people did it; women in their habits, men in their togs. Therefore, why not Miss Croydon?

And what was more natural than that Fanton, discovering her presence while he was breakfasting, should rise, cross the room, and seat himself at her table opposite her? It would be only natural that he should seize such an opportunity to say something pleasant to her, after such a fiasco as the dinner party of the preceding night had been.

"Have it served at the table in the window near where Mr. Fanton is now seated with the lady, Alonzo," Jack directed, as he read off what he wanted—or, rather, what he had ordered, for he did not want any of it, having eaten heartily that morning at Nick Carter's.

"Yes, sir," was the reply; and then: "Pardon me, Mr. West, but I would very much like to ask you a question which I hope you will not think impertinent."

"All right. Go ahead, Alonzo, only make haste, for I must hurry."

"You were at Mrs. Blank's dinner last night, sir. Something happened to spoil the party. It broke up very early, and the dinner was not much more than half eaten. Might I know what the trouble was, Mr. West?"

"No, Alonzo, you may not know. It was positively agreed that nothing should be said about it, outside, and the waiters were sworn to secrecy. I think they will keep their oaths, too, for—well, there is a severe threat hanging over any one of them who should happen to tell about it."

"I have already found that out, sir. I cannot get a word out of any of them."

"The trouble was through no fault of this establishment, Alonzo. That is all that you need know. And that reminds me, I'd like to have a look into that room. Is it locked, do you know?"

"No. The cleaners haven't finished with it, yet."

"They are in it now?"

"I think so. I am not sure."

"Oh, well, it doesn't matter," Jack said negligently, and sauntered away. All the same, instead of seeking the lavatory, he passed around the elevator shaft and walked up the stairs two flights, ascending the second one two steps at a time.

A moment later he stood upon the threshold of the room where the necklace had been stolen, and he saw that the cleaners had not disturbed it, as yet. Save for the fact that the linen, the dishes, and the silver had been gathered up and carried away, the room was in practically the same condition as when Jack Wise left it the preceding night.

And there wasn't a soul there to see him when he entered and closed the door after him. He could not lock it, because there was no key.

It has been said that the table was arranged for the dinner in the form of a great horseshoe, although it was scarcely as contracted at the ends. Nor were the ends as wide apart as a crescent; something between the two would describe it better.

It was made and placed together, in sections, and now that the coverings were off, the sections were disclosed plainly enough—and each was so made that two men could carry one of them easily.

He saw that his own seat had been located exactly where two of the sections came together, and, guided by the crack between them, Madame Duclos had been directly opposite him.

But he was not there so much to see where he and others had been seated at the dinner—he already knew that—as to discover a possible hiding place for the necklace.

The search that had been made of the people in the room at the time, had extended, afterward, to the

things in the room. He had insisted upon that himself, as only fair, and, although there had been hundreds of places among the flowers and decorations and urns and vases and behind the pictures on the walls where the necklace might temporarily have been bestowed, it had not been found; and Jack, because he had assisted at that part of the search, knew that it had been thorough.

"Where else, then, could the thing have been hidden away?" he asked himself.

He stepped forward and seized that section of the table that was to the left of the spot where he had been seated, lifted it, and turned it over upon its side. It was the section at which Connie, Phil Sears, Miss Croydon, and Manchester had been seated at the one side of it, while Barnaby, Mrs. Powderly, Judge Compton, and a Mrs. Yates were at the opposite side, and Connie had sat next to himself, and Barnaby next to Madame Duclos.

He turned it finally all the way over so that it rested with its legs in the air, and he stood over it, examining it. The only thing that he discovered that was surprising, was the cheapness of the material of which the table was constructed, now that its secrets were disclosed. But there was not a possible hiding place beneath it, anywhere.

There was no hook or nail upon which the necklace might have been hung; no wax or other substance to which it might have been made to cling.

A glance at the underside of the section was sufficient to convince him of all that.

Nevertheless, he turned over the next section in the same manner.

His own seat had been exactly at the junction of the two, as had Madame Duclos'. Mabel and a Captain Atherton of the British army had been his nearest neighbors at that section, as Fanton and Miss Tufts had been related to the madame at the opposite side of it.

The result was not essentially different from the other one.

There was nothing on the underside of the table to which the necklace could have been attached. Certainly it was not there then.

Satisfied, he started to right the sections again, and replace them, and, in doing so, picked up a thumb tack, such as artists use with their canvasses and easels. He let the table remain on its side while he picked the tack up from the floor. In doing that, he discovered another one at a little distance from the first.

Now he found a third tack.

Artists' thumb tacks have large, well-shaped brass heads which do not hurt the thumb when it is pressed upon them. The shanks of them are very short, and very small. Their points are made as sharp as any needle. They will pierce the grain of soft wood as easily as a needle will pierce cloth; and, having pierced it, they will cling tightly—for that is what they are made for, to hold things in place.

And the under side of that horseshoe table that was made in sections was pine. It had been veneered and stained and made ornate in other ways on the upper side, to appear to be mahogany—but it was only pine after all.

And Jack had found three thumb tacks under the table.

A handkerchief or a napkin to contain the jewels, and a little presence of mind and expertness on the part of the thief, was all that had been necessary to create a temporary hiding place for the necklace.

CHAPTER IX.

WHO WAS THE FIFTH PERSON?

Jack had righted the two sections of the table so far as to replace them upon their sides, and he was now anxious to discover three holes in the under side of one of those sections, into which the tacks would fit—and, having discovered them, to determine whose seat, at the dinner, had been nearest to the spot where they were made.

He bent forward eagerly to do that—and was startled by voices from the corridor, outside the door. It was the voice of a woman.

There were plenty of women about the place even then, but they were cleaners. There is a difference in the cadences of refined and educated tones, and those of the workaday careless person.

That was what made Jack leap to his feet and start hastily across the room toward the smaller one that adjoined it, which was used on occasion as a butler's pantry. This smaller room had been used the preceding night, after the theft, by the committee of ladies who had searched their indignant sisters.

Jack had the feeling that somebody was approaching the dining room; he had the intuition of their identities, too, although the tones of the voice he had heard had not been sufficiently plain for him to recognize it.

Nevertheless, he had been warned in time, and he reached the smaller room just at the instant before the door upon the corridor was opened, and Corinne Croydon, accompanied by Merle Fanton, made her appearance upon the threshold.

But she stopped there.

She made no effort to enter the room, seeming content to gaze into it, upon the wreck of tables and flowers and decorations.

A banquet hall after the feast is a sorry-looking spectacle.

She stopped upon the threshold, almost filling the space, for only one-half of the door had been opened; and Fanton stood behind her, much taller, looking over her shoulder into the room.

Their voices had ceased. For a space which might have been a second, or less, or more, neither of them spoke. Jack, who peered out at them from his place of concealment beyond the door of the adjoining room, wondered at the soberness of their faces, and the en-

tire absence of anything representing a smile upon either countenance.

But the hiatus came to an end, and Miss Croydon laughed; just a bit uneasily, Jack thought, although he appreciated the fact that he might have imagined that. Then she spoke.

"What a gruesome place!" she said to her companion over her shoulder, after which she moved a little to one side to make room for him; and he passed her so that he stood inside the room while she remained where she had first taken her stand, upon the threshold. "One would think that a funeral had been held here, instead of a banquet, Mr. Fanton."

He agreed with her, with a light laugh and a shrug.

"I wonder where it can be, now?" she said then, referring without a doubt to the necklace.

"Heaven only knows, Miss Croydon," Fanton replied, with another shrug.

"It must have been hidden somewhere in this room, after it was stolen, don't you think so?" she asked, after another short pause, this time half turning toward him.

"Again I reply—Heaven only knows," he answered, with a wry smile.

"It is truly terrible to think that somebody in that brilliant party was a thief, isn't it?" she said lightly.

"Do you know, I have been all the morning going over all of them in my mind, and trying to determine which one it was. Have you?"

"To tell the truth, I have scarcely thought about it at all this morning," he drawled. And he turned his back toward the interior of the room. "Shall we go now?"

"Yes; if you like. But, look! I wonder why those tables have been turned over?"

"By the cleaners, probably," he answered.

"Perhaps by the servants, searching for the necklace," she suggested.

"Possibly; only the servants, with the exception of those who were in the room at the time, are not supposed to know that the necklace was stolen."

"Then some of them have been back here this morning, looking for it. Don't you think so, Mr. Fanton?"

"Well, anyhow, I don't think we can find it by standing here," he replied, in a tone that was unmistakably brusque and impatient.

Jack Wise, hearing that tone and noting it, and noting more particularly the manner in which it was received by the girl, straightened himself where he stood, and wondered.

It was not a tone that a gentleman would use to a lady upon so slight an acquaintance as Fanton had with Miss Croydon—particularly a gentleman so suave and polite in everything that he did, and so Chesterfieldian in his manners always, as Merle Fanton was known to be.

Nor was that so much the point which Jack noticed, as was the manner with which Miss Croydon accepted it.

She did not seem to hear, and still less to heed the manner of his speaking.

It fell upon her ears unnoticed, as if she were more or less used to it—and for the first time it struck Jack that their attitude toward each other, even in that doorway, was not the one of utter strangeness, which it should have been under the circumstances.

There is a certain form of unspoken familiarity and ease of manner between two, when they are together, which is detectable, although unexplainable, at once.

It dwells in the attitude of the body, in the poise of the head, and the glance of the eye, in the tone rather than in the words of what may be said.

The two turned their backs upon the room, passed out of it, and closed the door behind them. Jack, lingering for a moment where he was, to make sure that they would not return and discover him, again approached the overturned tables.

He wanted to find those tack holes in the pine wood, for he was very sure that they were there.

But he was fated not to look for them at just that moment.

The door opened again, suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, when he had half crossed the room, and Alonzo, the manager, entered, followed by several helpers, to whom he was delivering voluble directions.

He saw Jack, of course, and stopped.

"Ah, Mr. West," he said, and smiled. "So you, also, have taken an unusual interest in this room this morning, I see. I have come to the conclusion that something of value must certainly have been lost."

"But why, Alonzo?" Jack asked.

"I did not tell you when we talked together a little while ago; but—well, you are the fifth person of those who dined here last night, who has visited the room again this morning; and two of them came very early indeed."

"Is that so? Will you tell me who they were?"

"Why, you must have seen Mr. Fanton and the lady who were just here. You were really together, of course, searching for the lost article; eh?"

Jack permitted the manager to think so.

"Mr. Fanton takes his breakfast here always, so there is nothing strange about his wishing to look in upon the room and bringing the lady with him. But there was one gentleman here—I did not get his name—before seven o'clock; and—"

"Was it a Mr. Manchester, perhaps?" Jack asked quickly.

"No. He came half an hour after the other one had gone."

"Oh; he did, eh? Well, that makes up the five. Now, try to remember who the first one was, Alonzo. I would like to know."

"I don't know. I did not see him. Emile was at the desk, and the gentleman told him that he was one of the guests last night—and so forth." And with a wave of his hand the manager set the workers at their task.

For an instant Jack gazed regretfully at the tables, and saw that all were being moved aside and out of the way to give the cleaners their opportunity. Then he followed Alonzo from the room.

CHAPTER X.

SPARRING FOR INFORMATION.

Jack was not certain whether he wished to encounter Merle Fanton and Miss Croydon just then, or not. So he left it to chance.

Chance arranged it that he should do so. It was Alonzo, the manager, who aided chance, for he had overtaken them in the lower hall and was talking with them when Jack joined the group.

Whether or not Fanton and Miss Croydon believed that he came from outside the building and had only just arrived, he could not say.

He watched them rather closely as he approached, and he could not discover that either of them manifested the least surprise at seeing him there, although he would have said that a deeper flush stole for a moment into the cheeks of Corinne Croydon.

There was an opportune incident about the encounter which Jack, upon the instant, determined to make the most of. It was that Fanton was in the act of taking his leave of the young woman when Jack approached, and could not very well alter his apparent intention.

Fanton *had* to go, so to speak, because he had already started to go.

There was no reason why Miss Croydon should not have gone also—other than convention, which might have looked askance upon the two together so early in the morning, and she without a chaperon.

Jack resolved to detain her if he could.

His determination was taken suddenly and without thought. Nevertheless, he acted upon it.

"Going, Fanton?" he said, and laughed. "It's good of you to leave Miss Croydon with me. I need company. I hope you won't desert me, Miss Croydon."

"But I was going, too," she replied.

"Please don't—unless you very much prefer Fanton's company to mine." Jack was taking undue advantage of his youth.

While she hesitated for a reply, Fanton laughed, raised his hat, said good morning, and went away.

"I saw you in the park this morning, Miss Croydon," Jack said. "I did not expect to discover you again, here."

"I came for some breakfast," she replied.

"Then I hope you haven't had it, and will take some with me."

"But I have breakfasted, you see."

"How unfortunate." Still, that need not preclude you from taking pity upon me."

"I couldn't possibly eat another breakfast, you know."

"But you could look on while I eat mine. You see,

"I'm only a mere boy of nineteen, and you wouldn't possibly be flying into the face of any of the conventions if you did that—would you?"

"I'm afraid that you are rather sophisticated for a boy of nineteen, Mr. Wise. But if you so seriously desire it, there is no reason why I need not sit with you for a moment."

They seated themselves opposite each other at a table. Jack thought it policy to wait for her to speak.

"Tell me what brought you here so early this morning," she said.

"I suppose it was the same errand that brought you here, Miss Croydon," he replied.

"Breakfast? Of course."

"No. The necklace."

"Oh. I had—no, I won't falsify about it. I had not forgotten about it. But why should the lost necklace have brought you here now?"

"Well, you see, I thought perhaps it might be hidden somewhere in that banquet room," said Jack.

"Have you looked for it?"

"Yes."

She turned a half startled glance toward him.

"When?" she asked.

"Just now," he replied.

"Do you mean that you were in the room where it was lost?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Fanton and I were up there also—as far as the door."

"Yes. I saw you."

"You did? Were you there, then?"

"Yes. Inside. You came away rather suddenly."

"We only looked into the room. We did not care to go inside."

"So I discovered."

"But you did go inside. Did you also search for the necklace?"

"Not exactly. I think I may say, however, that I searched for traces of it."

"Oh! And did you find any?"

"I hardly think so. I found some thumb tacks."

"Thumb tacks?" She raised her eyebrows. "What are they?"

"Things that artists use in fastening canvasses to stretchers, and so forth."

"I don't see the connection."

"Nor I. That's why I mentioned it."

"Was it you who overturned those tables in that room?"

"I'm afraid it was."

"What did you expect to find under them? The thief?"

"Well, not exactly. But, honestly, Miss Croydon, I did come here because I more than half expected that the thief might show up here this morning."

"Why?"

"Because the thief could not very well have carried

the necklace away with him or her last night, and must therefore have hidden it somewhere in that room until this morning. In that case it would be very necessary to get it again before the army of cleaners got to work in the room."

"So—I suppose that remarkable deduction you have made suggests now that either I, or Mr. Fanton, may be the thief."

"Good heavens, no!"

"Yourself, then."

"Indeed no."

"But we all came here, as you suggested."

"That is true enough, but don't think for a moment that we are the only ones out of last night's company who have honored this place this morning."

"Has the entire company, perhaps, made its appearance here?" There was an ironical tone in her question which Jack thought did not sit well upon her. Jack replied with directness.

"Indeed no."

"Who of the others have been here, Mr. Wise?"

"Two others besides ourselves."

"Do you mean five in all?"

"Precisely. Mr. Manchester and an unknown."

"An unknown? I don't think I understand that."

"Well, another person came here while Emile was in charge. And Emile says he doesn't know who it was. At least, that is what I was told."

"Who could it have been?"

"Why, the thief, of course."

Jack did not in the least think that, however.

He had his own ideas as to who that unknown person might be, but was not prepared to voice them.

But his ready reply brought a sigh of apparent relief from his companion, and so he added quickly:

"So, you see, that absolves you and Mr. Fanton and me and Mr. Manchester, doesn't it?"

She did not reply. Instead, she bent toward him with sudden interest in her tone and manner.

"What is your opinion of Mr. Manchester?" she asked, in a low tone.

Once more Jack Wise took advantage of the privileges of youth which permitted him to say things which might have been regarded as bad taste in one who was older.

"My opinion of him is the same as my opinion of—of you, for example, Miss Croydon. You see, I don't know either of you, and it wouldn't be possible for me to think ill of Mr. Manchester just because he saw fit to come here this morning, any more than it would be possible for me to think ill of you because you saw fit to come here this morning. That is quite plain, isn't it?"

"I should say so. You are almost impolite, Mr. Wise."

"I hope not. What do you think of Mr. Manchester?"

"Frankly, and I have no hesitation in saying it—the

does not seem to me to be—to be a person—who would steal a necklace."

It was plain that that was not at all what she had started to say, but Jack elected to accept it as if it were.

He twisted the subject a trifle. His latent qualities that made for detective ability were in the ascendant just then.

"It's odd that you didn't see me when you and Merle Fanton went to the banquet room just now," he said.

"Is it? Where were you?"

"In that little room that is an imitation of a butler's pantry."

"Oh! Hiding from us?"

"Frankly, yes."

"Why?"

"I wanted to watch you."

"Again, why?"

"Well, for precisely the same reason that a person will stop in the street to watch a steeple jack at work at the top of the Metropolitan tower—to see if he will fall."

"Oh. That is rather vague, isn't it?"

"I don't think so. One doesn't want him to fall, you know, and one doesn't want to see him, really, if he should fall. But one invites the possibility of seeing the terrible spectacle, all the same."

"You mean that you thought it barely possible that one of us might fall, as you express it?" she asked, smiling.

"Well, if one may be excused for a lapse into convenient slang, Miss Croydon, I regarded it as barely possible that one or both of you might fall for something—and you did."

She straightened suddenly in her chair, and the act, almost unnoticeable, was not lost upon Jack Wise.

"Just what do you mean by that, Mr. Wise?" she asked. "I confess that I am not thoroughly well versed in your slang."

"I mean that I have made a bet with myself that you and Merle Fanton are not the utter strangers you have represented yourselves to be. Am I right? Do I win, or do I lose?"

"Don't you think that you are just a little bit impertinent, Mr. Wise?"

"I know I am. But that doesn't answer my question, Miss Croydon."

"Really, you are incorrigible."

"Incorrigibility is a talent with me," he laughed. "You and Merle are old acquaintances, aren't you?"

"Yes. But—there is no harm in telling you—there has been an estrangement."

"I see. What you would call a falling-off in the friendship, fixed up and repaired this morning at the breakfast table. You see, I saw you together in here, before I saw you in the banquet room."

"I think," she said, with studied deliberation, "that you should have followed the profession of a detective, Mr. Wise."

"I am thinking seriously of doing so, Miss Croydon."

"With this case of the Kregoff necklace as a beginning?"

"Why, yes. It would make a good starter if I could find it, wouldn't it?"

"An excellent one, I should suppose."

"Perhaps you could help me to run down the culprit."

"If you could point out to me who that person might possibly be, I might offer my assistance," she replied, somewhat coldly.

"Let's eliminate," he suggested.

"Let's do what?"

"We'll begin by eliminating yourself and me from the consideration. It's a safe bet that one of the five persons who came here this morning is the thief, isn't it?"

"Really, you go altogether too fast for me, Mr. Wise."

"Oh, I'm talking for the sake of argument. If we cut you out, and cut me out, that leaves Fanton, Manchester, and the Unknown, to be considered. Now, shall we eliminate Fanton, too?"

"I really think we ought to do so," she replied, smiling. "Of course all this that you are saying is a joke, but I scarcely think that the several objects of your inquiry would feel flattered if they knew about it."

"Nevertheless, if we eliminate Fanton and ourselves, that leaves Manchester and the unknown. Now, Manchester—by the way, did you ever know him before, as well as Fanton?"

"How absurd! Of course not. Why do you ask that?"

"A gentleman, whose opinion I esteem highly, made a remark to me last night which has interested me, Miss Croydon."

"What was it?"

"He said that the thief was one of the guests, and not one of the servants. He said that the Kregoff necklace would not be worth fifteen cents to any person who wished merely to dispose of it for gain—that is, could not be so disposed of because of its celebrity."

"Yes."

"He said that no matter who might actually have taken the necklace, the real thief was undoubtedly a woman."

"I should suppose that the person who actually took it was the real thief."

"Not necessarily."

"Why not?"

"Because—well, suppose a case, and don't take offense, please, in doing it."

"Very well. I promise."

"Suppose you had known Manchester at some time in the past; suppose he had been in love with you; suppose you had said, just for fun, 'Bring me the necklace and I will marry you,' suppose—"

"What utter nonsense are you talking, Mr. Wise?"

"Well, you used to know Fanton—and anybody could see with half an eye that he has been and is now more than half in love with you, notwithstanding the fact that he became engaged to another woman last night. Suppose he——"

She left her chair hastily.

"Honestly, Mr. Wise, this absurd and not overnice form of joking, permissible from you because you are young, is going altogether too far. It isn't fair to those who are absent."

Jack laughed outright and heartily. He arose from his chair and faced her with extended hand.

"Forgive me, Miss Croydon," he said, with his rare smile. "I'm only a big boy after all, and I do like to banter people. Up at Wiseacres, which is my home, they call me an unconscionable tease. I hope you won't stop liking me just because of my fun."

She smiled back at him and took his hand.

"Certainly not," she said. "But you are rather startling, you know."

He bowed over her hand.

"If I were several years older than I am, I shouldn't wonder if I might not consider the theft of a Kregoff necklace a very small thing as compared to——"

"That will suffice, Mr. Wise," she interrupted severely.

Then she went away and he finished his breakfast alone; but very much preoccupied concerning certain features of the conversation he had just held with Miss Croydon.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIVE WHO WENT BACK.

Jack decided that Fanton and Miss Croydon had met by appointment, and for a purpose. Their actions had impressed him—and so had the words uttered by Alonzo, concerning the others who had been there that morning.

Jack himself made the fifth of the guests who had found interest in the dismantled banquet hall and who had visited it as early as possible.

There had been Manchester, then himself, then Miss Croydon and Fanton.

But first of all,—and unconscionably early at that, there had been another person who was unknown.

"Who was that other?" he asked himself; and the answer came at once to his mind, and he wondered that he had not thought of it before.

"Phil Sears, of course," he said, aloud; and added in thought: "I remember that Phil promised last night to help me in this affair, so it was he who came so early, of course."

But when, half an hour later, Jack rode back to the stable to leave his horse and to change his riding togs for his street costume, he found Sears waiting for him.

"Hello, Jack!" was Phil's greeting. "They told me at the house that you were out riding, so I came here

to wait for you. I want to help you in that necklace business. It interests me."

"There isn't any doubt of that, old chap," was Jack's smiling reply. "Anything that will get *you* out of bed before seven in the morning and send *you* prowling around dismantled banquet halls, certainly has interest for *you*."

Philip's reply was an unmistakable stare.

"When I was a student and began my brilliant career in Latin, the professor used to say to me—'Construe!' So you get busy and construe that speech of yours, will you?"

"Haven't you been around at Cherrie's this morning? Weren't you there before seven o'clock, snooping around that dining room?" Jack demanded.

"Not on your life, Jackie! not so's you could notice it."

"Well, who the——"

"Hold on, there! Don't swear, if that is what you were thinking of doing. Has somebody been there?"

"Five of us."

"Oh!" with some dismay in his tone.

"But I don't know who the first one of the five could have been."

"Who were the other three besides yourself—for it is easy to guess that you were one of them."

"Yes. The others were Manchester, who went alone, and Miss Croydon and Fanton, who were there together."

"Eh? Together? To breakfast together? Gee! that's going some."

"Oh, they just happened to meet there, don't you know. I saw Miss Croydon in the park when I was riding there this morning. I don't think she saw me. Then she went to Cherrie's for her breakfast. And Fanton always breakfasts there."

"I see. But never so early; eh, Jackie?"

"Not usually, as I understand his habits."

"And—say!—I've had girls lose their grooms in the park, for me, before now. I'll bet an M against a C, which is a thousand against a hundred, my very good young man, that Mr. Merle Fanton and Miss Corinne Croydon have enjoyed more than a mere speaking acquaintance at some prehistoric period; they knew each other when they were protoplasm, or pollywogs, or something of that sort. I don't know that I make myself precisely clear, but I'll bet a red apple against a brick watch that it has been a case of 'Merlie' and 'Cora' between them, at some time. Get that?"

"I have been thinking that, too," said Jack, without smiling.

"Where does Mr. George Manchester come into the game?"

"Search me, Phil."

"I'd rather search him."

"Go to it, then, and do it."

"Do you mean that, Jack?"

"I certainly do."

"Well, I suppose I can undertake it. I'd much rather you'd have said Corinne, for I'm quite taken with that 'skoit,' if anybody should ask you. Wow! but she is a beauty, and no mistake."

"I wish Connie could hear you say that."

"Nonsense! Connie knows that I love her and only her. She isn't worried at my youthful exuberance about another."

"I wish I could find out who that other man was, who was searching that room this morning."

"I wish you could; but why in the world didn't you ask?"

"I did."

"Then why weren't you told?"

"For the very good reason that nobody knew how to tell me."

"Then take it from me, Jack, that it was a stranger. Bing! More mystery."

They left the stable together and had walked some distance before either of them spoke again; then Sears said:

"Cutting out the others, Jack, what did you find out at Cherrie's, this morning? And, incidentally, why did you go there?"

"I went there to see what I could find. I went there, in a word, because I got the notion into my head that after the necklace was stolen, it was hidden somewhere there, and I tried to figure out where it could have been concealed."

"Great minds, Jack, and all that. I've been thinking the same thing. That is why I am here with you now. But, go on."

"Well, I don't mind putting together the incidents of the morning to see what we can make of them."

"Fire away."

"I went to Cherrie's to look into the room where we dined last night."

"With hopes of finding the lost property, of course."

"No; but with a vague idea that I might find where it had been hidden temporarily."

"I see."

Jack then told him about the thumb tacks, and added:

"That necklace was bundled into a handkerchief, or a napkin, and was fastened to the under side of the table while the search was being made. It was within the reach of everybody all the time, and somebody went back to that room this morning to get the necklace."

CHAPTER XII.

A MYSTERY ABOUT THE UNKNOWN.

At a street corner Phil paused and slapped his hand upon Jack's shoulder.

"I've got an idea," he exclaimed.

"Then, for Heaven's sake let's have it, Phil," was the reply.

"It's this: The mater is giving a very select—a

yurrrry select little dinner at the house to-night. Twenty guests. No more. You know about it."

"Yes; but—"

"Hold on, now. I'm going to make my mother add two to her list of guests for to-night. I'm going to get her to appoint me as her special messenger to carry the invitations; see?"

"No; I don't see."

"Then I'll reappoint you as substitute for myself to deliver one of them—the one to Miss Croydon, who is to be invited because of the very unhappy affair of last night, and to show that—well, that there is no reflection upon Miss Croydon and Mr. Manchester, because of the incident. Are you beginning to take?"

"Yes."

"I'll go to Mr. M. I'll tell him that I have sent a friend with the invitation to Miss Croydon, and that I think it would be a dandy good thing to do if he could just make it a point to be present so that they could both meet again, and be sent in to dinner together again, and all that."

"But what is the point?"

"The point is that Fanton will be there. Barnaby and Miss Tufts and Judge Compton, and Madame Duclos and Mrs. Powderly—oh, what's the use. They will all be there that we are interested in."

"But I won't be there, and you won't and——"

"And we all will be there, for I shall fix it all up with the mater; and then, Jack, if something does not happen to give you an opportunity to display your powers as a detective, I'll eat my hat."

"All right."

"Is it a go?"

"Yes."

"And look here; one suggestion, old man."

"What?"

"You must fix it up with Mabel so that you can make love to the Croydon without getting into hot water for doing it. See?"

"Phil, I'm beginning to think that you ought to have been the detective, instead of me. But we will see what will happen. It isn't a bad idea, although I shall not wait for the dinner. I am going right now to look up Manchester. The trouble is, I don't in the least know where he is staying."

"I do. He was second from me at the table last night. He told me he was at the hotel Sphinx."

For reply, Jack waved his hand and ran into the street to catch a car, and left Sears staring after him. He dropped off a few minutes later, and found his way around the corner to the Sphinx, which was one of the new hotels of the city. Ten minutes later, Manchester received him in the parlor of his suite on the tenth floor.

The greeting between them was cordial.

"I have been to Cherrie's this morning to look the ground over," Jack said, by way of a beginning.

"So have I," was the reply.

"Yes. I heard that you had been there. And there

were others. Miss Croydon was there, and Mr. Fanton was with her."

Manchester looked his surprise; and he said, as if trying to remember:

"Fanton? Fanton? Oh, yes. But, how did they happen to be together so early, I wonder?"

"Naturally enough, Manchester. She was riding in the park and went there for her breakfast. He almost lives there. They met, and renewed their slight acquaintance. But there was also another person there, before any of us—and I don't know who that person was."

"Nor do I. I wish I did."

"What! You knew about his being there?"

"I saw him."

"Oh!"

"He was coming out of the room as I went into it. He did not seem to look at me at all, although I was acutely conscious that he did so."

"Can you describe him?"

"Fairly well; but I can tell you one thing right at the start. He was not one of the guests who was present last night."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Positive."

"Well, what about him?"

"Not tall, but handsome; well-dressed; a gentleman; a pair of the keenest eyes I ever saw. Fine teeth—say, Wise, I got the notion, after I came out, that he was a detective whom Madame Duclos had put onto the affair."

"By Jove!" exclaimed Jack.

"Eh?"

"I know who it was?"

"You do?"

"He was Nick Carter, or I'm a Dutchman. Ever hear of him?"

"I should say so. Do you really mean that?"

"I sure do. Come on! I'm going back there."

"Where? To Cherrie's? What for?"

"You'll see, presently. Come on! You said you would help in this affair, and so you've got to help."

"My dear Mr. Wise," Manchester said, as they descended in the elevator, "you can count on me till the last gun fires. I'm only interested in finding that necklace. Shall we take a cab, or walk?"

"We'll walk. It isn't far."

"I wonder," Manchester said presently, "if you went to Cherrie's this morning with the same idea that I had in mind when I went there so early?"

"I don't know. What was yours?"

"The necklace was, of course, hidden somewhere in that room until after the searching for it was over, and the thief had an opportunity to obtain possession of it again."

"Of course."

"Well, I went there to search for it, thinking that they couldn't get it, perhaps, till this morning. So

I searched—among the decorations, the plants, the flowers, and all that sort of thing; and I even turned over those two sections of the table where we were all seated; that is, where you were seated, and where I was."

"You did that?"

"I did."

"Find anything?"

"Just one thing. I merely picked it up because it was there, because somebody might step on it, you know."

"It was a brass-headed thumb tack, such as artists use, wasn't it?"

"Yes. How did you guess that?"

"Because I did the same thing that you did, and I found three such tacks on the floor. Now, Manchester, it is interesting to know just when you were there?"

"About seven-fifteen."

"And the man you saw, whom I think might have been Nick Carter, was there before you?"

"He was."

"Well, you can put this in your pipe and smoke it. If the man you saw was Nick Carter, we will hear about it, and maybe he has got the necklace already. If it was not Nick Carter, it was somebody who was sent there by the thief, to get the necklace."

CHAPTER XIII.

A DIRECT ACCUSATION.

"Alonzo," Jack said to the manager of the place, as soon as they entered it, "I want to see the man who was here at the desk this morning when that first arrival of the day happened, when the man went to the room where the dinner took place last night. Send for him."

Alonzo rang the bell, gave the order, and the man appeared. Jack took him off to one side, out of hearing of the others. The man was as well known to him as Alonzo was.

"Emile," he said, "I am representing Mr. Nick Carter. I am here in his interests. I tell you that in order that you may not hesitate to reply to my questions."

"Yes, sir. I understand."

"You know Mr. Carter very well, indeed, by sight, I know."

"Yes, sir."

"How long was he here, when he came early this morning? Did you go to the dining room with him?"

"No, sir, I did not. He went right up there, alone. I gave him the key, for the door was locked. He was up there less than half an hour, I think."

"What did he say to you when he came down again?"

"He gave me back the key, and he said that he had not locked the door again, because there would likely be others who would like to look into that room this

morning, and he would prefer that there should be no obstacle in their paths. Then he added: 'You are to forget that I have been here at all, Emile.' That is all."

"Thank you," said Jack, and rejoined Manchester. "Now, Alonzo, I want you to find out something for me, at once, and to be very particular about it, too."

"Very well, Mr. Wise. What is it?"

"Get your report from the linen room. Find out if one of the napkins is missing from among those that were used in that room last night. I think you will discover that one of them is missing."

"That fact has been so reported already, sir," was the reply. "It is remarkable that you should——"

"Never mind that. Now, do another thing. Bring me a napkin that is exactly like the one that is missing. Put it in an envelope, and seal it, and have it ready for me when I come downstairs. This gentleman is going with me to that room for a moment."

"Please, Mr. Wise, won't you tell me what has happened? I can help a great deal better if I know something about it."

"I'll tell you this much. An article of value is missing. One of the guests who was present, probably knows what became of it. Nobody connected with the house is suspected. Now, go ahead and do as I have requested, and if you say a word about what I have told you——"

"I won't, sir, and thank you for telling me; and for reassuring me."

"Very well. Now attend to that napkin business. I want one that is precisely like the one that is missing. Come along, Manchester."

They used the elevator and stepped out at the door of the banquet hall, which was open.

It had been swept and cleaned and cleared of all impediment, and the great table had been put together again, but this time, owing to the sections of which it was formed, and because of the taste of the directors of the affair that was to happen next in that room, the sections had been put together in the form of a huge letter S. One can readily understand how a table made in sections to form a horseshoe, or a crescent, can be made into the form of a letter S.

"We are too late," said Jack, pausing in the doorway.

"Too late for what, Wise?"

"To find those holes that the tacks made in the tables; and even if we should find them, we could not even guess at the location of them, last night."

"That's so."

"We'll have to depend upon the napkin; but, anyhow, we can look for the holes. I would just like to satisfy myself that they are there. You found one tack, and I found three of them. Where did you find yours?"

"I picked it up from the floor about ten feet from where I was seated last night, to my left."

"And I found my three almost directly under where you were seated last night, Manchester. That is, under that section of the table. Come on. We'll begin at the middle and work both ways. Just turn the tables on their sides, look at them, see if you can find the holes, and, if you do so, sing out. I'll do the same."

It was Manchester who called out presently, after both had examined several of the tables:

"Here they are, Wise."

Jack hurried over to him.

Sure enough, there they were; but only three holes. The fourth was not there. Manchester remarked upon that fact when it was found that the tacks fitted into the holes. Jack explained it.

"One tack was dropped on the floor and rolled away out of reach when the attempt was made to use it," he said. "My theory is that the necklace, which is in three strands, was wrapped in the napkin, and was then pinned to the under side of the table with the tacks. Come on! We don't want anything more here, now."

"But what are you going to do with that duplicate napkin, Wise?"

"I'm going to find its mate, somewhere, that has three tack holes in it."

"As if you could find those holes in it, now, even if you had the napkin!"

"My dear chap, you forget that linen that is laundered as those napkins were, will hold the outlines of such a mark for a long time; and you also forget what a powerful magnifying glass can do, if it is properly used."

"By Jove!"

They passed out of the room together. In the corridor, Manchester remarked:

"One might think you were a full-fledged detective, Wise."

"Well, I'm not exactly full-fledged, as yet; but I am a detective, all right. You may as well know it. I am one of Nick Carter's assistants."

"Well, what do you think of that!"

Jack came to a full stop when they were near the elevator.

"Manchester," he said, "there was never a circumstance like this one when those who were present and witnesses to the affair, did not have opinions about it. You have got your own, although you are afraid to voice them. I have got mine, even though I am not yet prepared to voice them. But you've got a sneaking idea way down in the bottom of your mind, as to what became of that necklace. I know you have. The question is, are you willing to tell me what it is?"

"Are you willing to tell me yours?"

"Yes."

"You tell, and I will do the same," said Manchester.

"No matter what mine may happen to be, or whom it may hit?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then, I think this: That, although a

certain lady who was present last night did not actually steal the necklace, I do think that she knows where it is now; and knows the name of the person who did steal it. And I think she has got it now, too."

"To whom are you referring?"

"To Miss Corinne Croydon."

"For Heaven's sake, man! she sat next to me!"

"Precisely."

Manchester drew away from Jack.

"Do you think I stole the necklace, Wise?" he demanded.

"No; I most certainly do not."

"Who did, then?"

"The man who met Miss Croydon at this place this morning, by appointment, without a doubt. Merle Fanton. And he either came into this room before Nick Carter got here, and got the necklace, or Nick Carter got here first, and he got it. Either way, we'll get it back again. And we'll get the thief, too."

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW NICK CARTER WORKED.

Jack Wise tapped upon the door of Nick Carter's study, was bidden to enter, and passed inside.

"Well, Jack?" said the detective, looking up from the desk at which he was seated.

"I only thought I'd like to ask you if you found the necklace," Jack replied.

"No; I did not," Nick replied, with a twinkle in his eyes.

"You should have found it. You were the first one on the spot this morning," said the new assistant.

"On the contrary, I was not. Somebody was there before me, Jack. But before we continue with this sort of thing, I want to congratulate you upon what you have done—for your words tell me that you have accomplished a good deal."

"Not much, I am afraid. But I wish you would tell me what you did find when you went to that room at Cherrie's, this morning—and what it was that sent you there?"

"I went there because it was only logical, after hearing your story of the affair, to conclude that the thief had hidden the necklace somewhere inside of the room while the search for it was being made."

"Certainly."

"Having hidden it, there would be no opportunity to recover it again last night; that was also logical."

"Yes."

"The only place to hide it, where it would not be found if a search of the premises, and of the persons of those present, were made, was beneath the table; and it would have to be stuck fast there, with wax, or some such substance, or with sharp thumb tacks—because nothing else would answer the purpose; so I thought maybe I'd get there first. But I did not."

"Please tell me the rest. I want to know if I have been right in my own deductions."

"I think you have been, Jack."

"Please tell me about it, chief."

"I found four tacks on the floor. I dropped them back again, all of them, where I discovered them. I turned over some of the sections of the table, and I found three tack holes in one of them. Here is a plan of the table, and the section where I found the tack holes, is this one. Right here are the two seats nearest to where they were made when the necklace was wrapped in a napkin, or something of the sort, and pinned fast to the underside of the table. Who sat in this seat?" he added, indicating a point on his plan with his pencil.

"Madame Duclos."

"It is quite certain that Madame Duclos did not steal her own necklace, isn't it?"

"Yes. I think so."

"Who sat in this seat, next to her?"

"Fanton."

"Then it is also quite certain that Fanton did steal the necklace, isn't it?"

"I think that, too. I have been thinking it for the last three or four hours, without admitting to myself that I did think it, until about half an hour ago."

"All right. Anyhow, Fanton has left his club, where he has been living for two or three years, and has taken rooms at Cherrie's. He has been there more than a month, and he could easily have gone into that dining room at any hour between the breaking up of the party last night, and when I visited it this morning. And, Jack—"

"Yes, chief."

"I felt pretty certain that he was the one who took it, when I heard your story of the affair."

"You did? Why?"

"Because of several things. The character of the fastening upon the necklace, principally."

"But what of that?"

"It could not have been unloosed in a second of time. There was only one time according to your story of the affair, when that fastening could have been loosened without discovery."

"When was that?"

"When Fanton drew Madame Duclos into the Navaho room, proposed to her, and embraced her. That was a foolish admission for him to make, Jack. He would not have done it, only out of mere bravado, and because there was something else which happened at the same time which was much worse—and, being worse, it made the lesser thing seem small indeed."

"I'll confess that I had not thought about that."

"Well, you can think about it now. When Fanton called her into the room and embraced her, he did it purposely to get an opportunity to steal that necklace. I think I know why, too, but I haven't got to that, yet."

"You think that he tried actually to take the necklace from her then?"

"Yes; and could not. He only succeeded in unfas-

tening it, probably. Then, at the dinner table—you see I was not there, so I do not know what actually went on at the table, but I presume that Fanton was more or less attentive to madame, and found many an opportunity to touch her, or to reach around behind her, or something of that sort."

"He certainly did."

"Well, he found a chance to get the necklace—when he was bending over her, or reaching around her, or something of the sort. Anyhow, he got it."

"He sure did."

"And he probably wrapped it in his napkin. By the way, did you know that he is an artist of no mean ability, and that he thinks he can paint portraits? Of course, you knew that?"

"Yes. I did know it. Only he never really paints anything, does he?"

"No. I suppose not. But artists' thumb tacks come natural to him. They would suggest themselves. He probably had in mind to propose that everybody should be searched, when the theft was discovered, and arranged for the tacks to hide the necklace where he believed it would not be found—as it was not."

"But why in the world should he steal the thing at all, chief?"

"Because a woman asked him to do it. That is easy."

"By thunder!"

"You are thinking of Miss Corinne Croydon, Jack."

"Yes."

"Did you know that she met him at Cherrie's this morning, after I was there?"

"Yes."

"Emile telephoned the fact to me. I asked him to tell me about all who came into the place this morning; particularly about those who went to that room. I met Manchester on his way out of that room; at least, I supposed it was he. But I knew that he was not the thief, because the necklace was gone from its hiding place when I got there."

"Fanton and Miss Croydon went back to that room. I saw them there."

"And they probably saw you there, too, although you did not think so. Emile said, that they followed you to that room."

"Well, what are we going to do now?"

"You mean what are you going to do, Jack. This is your case, not mine."

"All right. What am I going to do?"

"You are going to recover the necklace from the possession of Corinne Croydon, for she has it in her possession, without a doubt. You are going to find it wrapped in a napkin like the one you have in your pocket now, which Emile tells me over the phone that you brought away with you, from Cherrie's; and then—"

"Wait a moment. How am I going to recover possession of it without going directly to her and making the accusation that she took it? She would probably laugh at me if I should do that."

"You've got to find a way, Jack. It's up to you," said the detective.

"I know," the young assistant cried out.

"Well?"

"There is a little dinner party at Phil's mother's, to-night. She is bidden, or will be. I'm to be sent with the invitation. I know how to do it! Only, will you go to that dinner at Mrs. Sears, in my place?"

"Yes."

CHAPTER XV.

THE DRAMATIC END OF IT.

Jack carried the invitation from Phil's mother to Miss Croydon, that afternoon. It was an invitation accompanied by a personal letter urgently requesting the young woman to be present, more particularly because of the unpleasant episode of the preceding night.

Miss Christy, with whom Miss Croydon was staying in the city, had sent her regrets several days before, and was, therefore, all the more eager that her guest should attend. It was she who received Jack when he called in the afternoon, and sent the invitation with the letter upstairs to Miss Croydon.

Word came down presently that she would be pleased to accept, and Jack rose to go. It was then that his opportunity came; the one he had planned, for he knew Miss Christy very well indeed. He said to her, after he had arisen:

"I want to make a confession to you. Perhaps you won't approve of it, but I'll make it all the same."

"Well, Jack, what is it?"

"I'm not going to that party myself, to-night. You told me long ago that I could come here at any time and go through those old prints of yours, and just now I happen to be looking for something that I am very anxious to find. I want particularly to find it to-night. Can I?"

"Why, if you like, I suppose so. I won't be here. I am going—"

"That won't make any difference. Just tell your butler about it, and he will let me in and give me the run of the house. The prints I spoke about are in the library, aren't they?"

"Yes; in the cupboards under the middle bookcase."

"That is sufficient. I may come, notwithstanding your absence?"

"Surely, Jack. I will so inform the butler. You can do as you like in my home. You know that."

"I wish I was a little older, or you were a little younger, Miss Christy; I'd be almost tempted away from Mabel."

She laughed heartily, and said, still laughing:

"That is about the nicest compliment I have received. Go away, now, boy, and don't get lost in the streets on your way home."

The dinner party assembled at Mrs. Sears' that evening, and Nick Carter occupied the place that was to have been Jack's. Miss Croydon was there, and so were Fanton and Manchester and the others.

It was vaguely understood that Jack had been called away at the last moment, and would join them later, and that he had sent Mr. Carter as his substitute.

Jack was, in fact, loitering in evening dress, near the home of Miss Christy; and he watched out until he had seen two carriages leave the house, one to take Miss Christy away to her engagement, the other to convey Miss Croydon to the party named.

He waited for a time after that, and then presented himself at the door of the house and was admitted. The butler had been expecting him.

Jack went to the library, and did nothing particularly, for half an hour or so, for if there was a thing in the world that he did not want to do that night it was to examine old prints. Finally he went into the hall and found the butler again.

"I'll have to go to Miss Christy's private shelves for what I want," he said; and went up the stairs. The butler thought nothing of it. Jack Wise was a privileged character wherever he went, and particularly so in that house, where he was a distinct favorite.

He was upstairs nearly an hour.

It was not so easy as he had supposed it might be to find what he sought; but he did find it.

He came near not doing so, too, for it was wrapped in a sealed package that was fastened with wax, and he was only persuaded that it was the necklace that was inside, by the sense of touching.

But he was assured of it, finally, and more particularly because he found a napkin that was figured and marked exactly like the one in his possession. He discovered the napkin in the same small cabinet against the wall which held the package.

He dropped them both, package and napkin, into his pocket, and left the house.

The dinner party was in full swing when he arrived at the home of the mother of Philip Sears, but there was a general exclamation of pleasure when Jack walked, unannounced, into the dining room.

Nick Carter, seated next to Mabel, looked up at him, and Jack gave the detective an almost imperceptible nod.

Jack halted in the middle of the floor.

"I want the attention of all of you for a moment," he said. "Let the dinner go. This is important."

They looked up at him in surprise, and he went on, quickly, addressing one of them.

"Madame Duclos," he said, speaking directly to her, "last night you lost a necklace. Somebody unfastened the catch that held it in place around your neck. Later, it was taken from you at the table; when you did not know it. Here is a package sealed with wax, and addressed to you, which I think contains the necklace. Will you open it, please—or shall I do it for you?"

She nodded. She was too much amazed to reply in words. Nick glanced toward Corinne Croydon, and saw that she was deathly white, and had become almost rigid in her effort to keep from fainting. Fanton was white, too, and was drumming upon the table

with the tips of his fingers, and biting his lips nervously.

Jack tossed a napkin upon the table, and some brass-thumb tacks beside it.

"That is the napkin from Cherrie's which held the necklace after it was stolen," he said. "Those are the tacks that pinned it to the under side of the table where the thief was seated. And this"—he tore the package open and disclosed the wonderful ornament—"is the necklace."

A gasp sounded from all sides, as one. A voice, strange to the ears of its owner, spoke. It was Corinne Croydon who broke the silence.

"Read the note that is in the package with the necklace," she said dully.

There were hasty glances toward her, and murmurs about her, interrupted by Jack, who read aloud these words:

"DEAR MADAME DUCLOS: Here is your priceless necklace. I am very sorry that it was taken from you. I made your temporary deprivation of it, and my temporary possession of it; the price of my consent to become the wife of a man whom I feared loved you. So, perhaps, I have temporarily deprived you of both, although I never really meant to do so. But I return both, now, for I could not keep the necklace, even if I wanted it, which I do not; and I would not keep the other, if I could. Please forgive me for it all. I am very miserable about it. And when it is in your heart to permit me, I will go to you and try to explain further.
CORINNE CROYDON."

Slowly every eye in the room turned toward Merle Fanton.

Slowly, but calmly, he rose to his feet in his place. Then he bowed silently to them all, and as silently turned and walked out of the room, without a word to anybody.

THE END.

MORE ABOUT THE WONDERFUL NECK- LACE.

"The Footprints on the Rug; or, Nick Carter Solves a Mixed Puzzle"—a thrilling detective story in which much more is heard about the priceless Kregoff necklace—will be found in the next issue of this weekly. The dramatic return of the wonderful necklace to its owner was even less dramatic than the highly mysterious incident which immediately followed as a sequel. Jack Wise again appears, and performs a remarkable feat in detective work under Nick's instructions. Nick and Jack both seek a pair of tiny shoes, which means they wish to find a woman who has unusually small feet. The woman wearing the shoes, the imprint of which fits the footprint on a certain rug, finds herself in a terrible predicament. Moreover, an imitation necklace is involved. And many persons are hard pushed to determine which is the real article and which the fake. The story is filled with exciting incidents. It is No. 809; out June 29th.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Bridegroom Has Mumps, Weds Just the Same.

Even the fact that the bridegroom had the mumps did not stop the wedding in the Wesley Methodist Church, in Pleasantville, N. J., of Miss Lola Gaskill and Max Kirsh. The bride thought it would be unlucky to postpone the ceremony, so it went on according to program, except for the absence of half a dozen men who allowed their fear of the disease to keep them away.

The Reverend Doctor Wells, the officiating clergyman, warned the guests in advance of the infectious nature of the bridegroom's affliction.

Vice President Has Power of a King.

In one of his sallies during his speech in Chicago Colonel Roosevelt discussed the statements of his opponents that he hopes to be dictator.

"There isn't much danger to the people," he said, "from a man who can do nothing unless he can persuade them that what he wants is right. I am going to make one remark I have often been tempted to make but never have before.

"Occasionally my gloomy foes have said that I wanted to be a king. I wanted to answer that they did not know kings and I did, I like the kings I have met, but I don't want to be one, because the function of those kings, expressed in the terms of democracy, would be the position of vice president for life with the leadership of the four hundred thrown in. I think there are other jobs that a full-sized man would prefer."

"Womanized Men."

"A veritable outbreak of human progress is beginning," said Morrison I. Swift, lecturing in Boston, Mass., on "How Women Have Womanized Man."

"Old ideas are crumbling at a rate never before known. The enlightenment of the last ten years has almost equaled that of the past 500. We know, too, that enlightenment has only begun, and that the grand changes are yet to come.

"One remarkable phase of this awakening is woman's attack on man. She can show easily that man's reign over the earth has been a failure. He has been far more a brute than human. Woman is rightly revolting against man, because in his present debased character he is a poor companion and because the world cannot be regenerated while he remains a semibrute.

"But the revolt is accompanied by the dangerous fallacy that woman is much better than man. A good many women seem really to believe this and to think that if the world were made over upon the pattern of their ideas it would be a much more perfect world. Women need regeneration quite as much as men do. A society built on the average woman's ideals would be more horrible than present society. That is why many highminded men are afraid to give her the vote.

"It is time for man to cry out for emancipation from woman and to start a movement parallel to votes for women for the liberation of his sex. There has been a great double enslavement. Man, the

stronger, first enslaved woman and made her his doll. Then she turned upon him and subjugated him with her doll qualities. She dollified him."

Eugenie at Grave of Her Son.

The royalist agitation has brought attention to a singular episode that marked the visit of the ex-Empress Eugenie to the grave of her son. The journey to Cape Town—it was in 1880—was undertaken when the stricken mother was in feeble health. There she rested, and then, with a large party as escort, proceeded north, and, after a wearisome experience came near to the place where "Lulu" fell, but ordered a halt because she felt herself too weak to proceed. That night, unable to sleep, she wandered from her tent. Aimlessly she strode in the brush till suddenly the fragrance of verbenas, her son's favorite flower, arrested her attention. Guided by the odor, she walked on, but her strength failed, and she fell, and was found unconscious by the servants who had followed her. Next day they took her to the grave. It was the spot where she had fainted. The verbenas were there, but they were dead.

"Atlanta" to Junk Pile.

The cruiser *Atlanta* is the next warship to go to the junk pile. Twenty-five years ago she was famous as one of the first line of the White Squadron, the other vessels in it being the cruisers *Chicago* and *Boston* and the gunboat *Dolphin*. Of this quartet only the *Chicago* and the *Dolphin* are now in active service, the *Chicago* being assigned to the naval militia of Massachusetts, while the *Dolphin* is used by the president and other high government officials in Washington.

In 1886 the *Atlanta* went into commission, with Captain Francis M. Bunce in command, and when, a few weeks later, she came to New York, so great was the interest in the cruiser, then one of the finest afloat, that crowds came from all parts of the country to see her.

The *Atlanta* is now the station ship at the Charleston Navy Yard. When she leaves there for the auction block her place will be taken by the cruiser *Olympia*, Dewey's famous flagship in the battle of Manila Bay. The *Atlanta* cost the government more than \$2,500,000. It is expected that she will be broken up by the purchaser for the value of the materials in her.

The Rainbow Chaser.

There is a big difference between an optimist and a "rainbow chaser." Don't get them mixed, says the *Insurance Press*. One is a man looking for the best things and willing to work to accomplish them; the other is a day dreamer, looking for a bag of gold, but too sleepy to get out of the slumber. An optimist, of the real sort, is the individual whose manly spirit goes through life with head erect, eyes bright, and determination.

Success comes to him who strives for it, who is willing to put his brains and his muscles to work to attain it. He is the

salt of the earth; he is the sunshine of the busy life. He accomplishes more through his optimism, lives longer, enjoys life while he goes through it, and everybody is sorry when he is gone. If you are not a born optimist, try to be one. It's good to be optimistic in every stage of the game of life, at your business or at home.

United States Provides for the Clean Sweep.

The United States for the most part manufactures the high-grade brooms of the world. The best are for domestic use, though some are exported, notably the inferior grades. Europeans generally cling to the old-style broom of twigs, and do not look with favor upon the modern American broom. Illinois furnishes the finest brooms.

Your Chances in Life Insurance Figures.

Do you ever wonder how long you are going to live? Ask an actuary, the man who figures it all out for the life-insurance companies and who can tell with almost supernatural precision.

He'll tell you that if you are 20, and in good health, chances are 12 to 1 that you'll live beyond 30. For longer life he'll offer these odds: To be 40, 5½ to 1; to be 50, 3 to 1; to be 60, 1-2-3 to 1. But he'll say that you have less than 1 chance in 2½ to be 70, less than 1 in 5½ to be 80, and only 1 chance in 100 to be 90.

Suppose you are 30. Your chances run this way: To be 40, 11 to 1; to be 50, 4½ to 1; to be 60, 2½ to 1; to be 70, 4½ chances in 10; to be 80, 1 in 5½; to be 90, 1 in 100.

Or 40 years old: Actuaries' odds are: To be 50, 8-1-3 to 1; to be 60, 2½ to 1; to be 70, 5 chances out of 10; to be 80, 1 in 5½ plus; to be 90, 1 in 100.

Fifty-year-olds' prospects are figured: To be 60, 4½ to 1; to be 70, about 1½ to 1; to be 80, only 1 in 5; to be 90, 1 in 100.

Say you are 60: It runs this way at that age: To be 70, 2 to 1; to be 80, 1 chance in 4; to be 90, 1 in 96.

If you are 70 your chances of turning the 80-year milestone are 3 to 8; to be 90, 1 in 50.

Eighty-year-old men and women have only 1 chance in 17 to stave off the funeral until after 90.

Espee Perforates Its Postage Stamps.

The Southern Pacific Railroad Company, in San Francisco, uses 243,000 postage stamps every thirty days. While one boy in the general offices of the company does not place all of them on envelopes, he perforates the "S. P." on each stamp before they are distributed from the treasurer's office.

In one month 24,000 one-cent stamps were used by the Southern Pacific. In the same period 173,000 two-cent stamps, 10,000 threes, 13,000 fours, 13,000 fives, 1,000 eights, and 6,000 tens were used. The Southern Pacific uses approximately 48¢ worth of postage stamps annually.

All of the Southern Pacific stamps are perforated with the company's initials before they are distributed. This is done for the purpose of identification. Upon differ-

ent occasions the Southern Pacific stations have been robbed of several hundred dollars' worth of postage stamps, but the burglars have never been able to dispose of them. This perforation is made with the permission of the government.

His Last Joy Bill.

A brand new five-dollar bill, across the face of which was written "the last of \$10,000, spent on wine, women, and song," was pushed through the teller's window of a bank, in St. Joseph, Mo., with the request that it be changed into small change.

"I've got to watch the corners now," was the only explanation offered by the young man who presented the bill. "It's the last of what my dad left me." The bill, under the law regarding mutilated bills, will go to the treasury for redemption.

Clergyman Performs His Own Wedding Ceremony.

When the Reverend C. Mantle telephoned to Annapolis, Ill., that he was flood bound and could not reach that place to perform the marriage ceremony for his friend, the Reverend John L. Peters, and Miss Maude Bowman, the guests were waiting at the Bowman home. Mr. Peters decided that there should be no postponement, and performed the marriage himself. He asked himself the questions, and made the replies, also propounding the questions to the bride.

Mr. Peters assured all present that the novel ceremony was entirely within the law of the land and the law of the church.

Lost—A British Battalion.

A good joke against the war office, in London, England, was passed round one of the military clubs. A clever senior clerk discovered that the efficiency returns of a certain territorial battalion had not been forwarded to the war office for last year.

Such a piece of carelessness on the part of the commanding officer was, of course, inexcusable. But, carrying his investigations further, the clerk discovered that there had been a similar omission the year before, and the year before that, too.

Plumming himself on his discovery, he laid the matter before his superior officer, who warmly commended him for his smartness, and hinted at promotion and all kinds of nice things. A peremptory letter was written to the general commanding the district demanding an explanation.

It came in the shape of a very curt note, stating sarcastically that the war office had disbanded the battalion in question four years before.

Will Carleton Tells of Visit to Longfellow.

At a meeting of the National Arts Club in New York, Will Carleton, the poet, told of a visit he had made to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

"Having no idea how Mr. Longfellow, a man famous since my recollection began, would receive a person so young in the literary world, it was with some timidity that I lifted the knocker of his famous old Craigie House, in Cambridge, Mass.," said Mr. Carleton. "Situated at a bend in Brattle Street, the noted 'Tory Row' of Revolutionary times, and overlooking the Charles River, it had been the stopping place of Washington, as well as other nobles, long years before. Attracted by its many associations, Mr. Longfellow had engaged quarters in the old colonial man-

sion when a young instructor in Harvard College, and years afterward he purchased the estate.

"My reveries were broken, however, by the appearance of the poet himself. He greeted me with the simplicity of a country gentleman receiving a neighbor. He showed me through the entire house, filled as it was with souvenirs, relics; and invaluable books. Then he insisted upon my remaining to luncheon, and presently invited me to contribute to a compilation of poems which he was preparing."

Brave Chinese Girls.

How determined Chinese girls ran away from school to fight with the revolutionists is part of an interesting story told by Mary E. Carleton, a medical missionary, in a recent issue of the *China Press*, Shanghai. Doctor Carleton says:

"After the battle of Poochow, the women of China were appealed to to help the cause of the revolution. So much attention was shown them by men of eminence that it turned their heads. Entertainments were floated to benefit the cause, women took part in political meetings and solicited funds, and a regiment of women petitioned the commander in chief of the army for a chance to fight, and were told that when all the men had been killed they might go.

"Several girls ran away from our mission school to go to war. They were pursued, but were armed, and threatened to shoot if interfered with.

"The day they were to sail for Shanghai two women missionaries were sent to induce them to return, and their experience was a lively one.

"The girls were in a room, and some one was trying to make them give up their idea of going, but they shouted 'who shall prevent us from dying for our country? Are our lives not our own?' And they dashed wildly out by twos, dressed in neat uniforms, with 200 bay recruits in front and 200 behind, to the music of life and drums, waving flags, and the popping of fire-crackers.

"These girls had been told by the military governor that they could not go, and the commissioner of customs had been ordered to allow no ship to leave port with Chinese women on board. So when our missionaries got to the steamer they were assured that the girls would not go. The officer in charge of the girls told the customs officials that they were going with the military governor's knowledge. Our ladies talked with the girls, who showed signs of weakening. The officer, seeing this, ordered the interview off.

"Wonders never cease in China, a country where women have held a most menial place. Yet in the recent revolution girls and women have given us a spectacle of daring and blind fanaticism equal to the dark ages or the Boxer movement."

United States Loses in Billiard Tournament.

At the International Amateur Billiard Tournament, held in Paris, France, the final game was won by Mortier, of France, who beat Darantier, of France, 400 to 150, thus winning the tournament and the challenge cup.

The final round was as follows: Mortier, France, eight games won, one lost; Artus, France, six won, three lost; Darantier, France; Maura, Belgium; Agassiz, Switzerland; Poensgen, Germany; Rouill,

France, each five won, four lost; Poggenburg, United States, three won, six lost; Labouret, France, two won, seven lost; De Dree, France, one won, eight lost.

Why He Wore Father's Pants.

Colonel Winter Wimberly, of Macon, Ga., enjoys a wide reputation as a story teller.

Colonel Wimberly was once engaged in a case in which the plaintiff's son, a lad of eight years, was to appear as a witness.

When the youngster entered the box he wore shoes several times too large, a hat that almost hid his face, long trousers rolled up so, that the baggy knees were at his ankles, and, to complete the picture, a swallowtail coat that had to be held to keep it from sweeping the floor.

This ludicrous picture was too much for the court, but the judge, between his spasms of laughter, managed to ask the boy his reason for appearing in such garb.

With wondering look, the lad fished in an inner pocket and hauled the summons from it, pointing out a sentence with solemn mien as he did so. "To appear in his father's suit," it read.

Oxford Outrows Cambridge.

For the fourth consecutive year Oxford won the classic annual eight-oared boat race from Cambridge, when the sixty-ninth annual regatta was rowed over the Thames from Putney to Mortlake, England, as a result of the swamping of the boats.

Oxford's time was 22 minutes and 5 seconds.

Oxford was the favorite in the betting, and the winning of the dark blue carried out confident predictions which had been made for weeks. The showing of the dark blue also made it evident that the Cambridge team would have to show miraculous improvement to carry off the honors.

Oxford now has thirty-eight victories to her credit to Cambridge's thirty.

Outclassed by their heavier opponents, the Cambridge crew was eight lengths behind when Oxford drove across the line.

Canadian Pacific to Run Trains in Europe.

The Canadian Pacific Railway is to run cars through some of the most picturesque scenery in Europe.

The company has made a contract with the Austrian government to supply and operate a system of observation cars on parts of the Austrian State railways, including the main route to Vienna via Zurich. The Swiss government also is interested in the project. Hungarians, too, are demanding that the service be extended to Budapest.

Seats in the new cars will cost a supplementary fare of only one dollar, and will be available for second-class as well as first-class passengers.

The service begins in the summer, and will cover three routes, namely, Zurich to Innsbruck, Vienna to Innsbruck, and Salzburg to Trieste.

The last-named route was recently completed by the Austrian government across the Tauern Karawanken and Julian Alps at a cost of \$700,000,000, and affords the grandest scenic run in Europe. The cars will be operated from the new Canadian Pacific office at Vienna, under the supervision of George McL. Brown, the company's European manager at London.

Discussing the new enterprise, Mr. Brown said:

"This new move is in keeping with the

world-wide activity of the Canadian Pacific. The routes selected are the most romantic in Europe, and well suited to American taste, featuring lofty mountains, ancient castles, medieval towns and villages, historic battlefields, and picturesque peasant costumes. The Tyrol is rapidly becoming the fashionable playground of Europe."

Rebels Kidnap Mexican Senoritas.

Ten of the most beautiful society girls in Zacatecas, Mexico, were kidnaped and carried into the mountains by Zapatistas. A posse of citizens from several small towns pursued the Zapata rebels, but the young women were placed on horses with the ten best riders in the rebel command, and they quickly outdistanced the pursuing posses and disappeared in the mountains.

Westinghouse to Improve Kinemacolor Pictures.

The kinemacolor camera, which has made moving color pictures a beautiful reality, makes thirty-two exposures of the film a second, while between the lens and the shutter is a rotating wheel, one-half of which carries a green-dyed gelatine filter, and the other half a filter of orange red.

These colors are obtained by dividing the three primary colors, red, blue, and yellow, into halves, and combining half the yellow with half the blue for the blue-green filter, and half the yellow with half the red for the deep orange.

The result is that the film shows alternate pictures of the object photographed, one giving all that is green in the landscape and the other all that is red.

These pictures are not superimposed on the screen, but succeed one another so quickly that the same effect is produced on the eye.

It is announced that a Westinghouse employee has chanced upon a process of taking a color picture by one exposure of an ordinary plate. This would be a great improvement on the Urban, or kinemacolor method, which does not secure a photograph in natural colors, though the effect is such upon the screen.

The Oldest Joke.

What is said to be the most ancient joke is related in one of the Berlin papyri of the sixth Egyptian dynasty—about 3,200 years anterior to the Christian era—and is to this effect: According to the papyrus a certain scribe who worked in the Temple of Thoth occupied apartments, where his neighbors on either side were a coppersmith and a carpenter.

Those honest artisans were industrious workmen, and made such a noise all day and most of the night that the poor scribe was almost driven mad. At length, by a stroke of craftiness, he buttonholed each neighbor separately and bribed him to change his lodgings. The neighbors did—with each other. This tale has kept the world amused for 5,000 years.

Gives Blood in gratitude to Hospital.

After having given some of his blood to another patient as a token of gratitude to the Kings County Hospital, New York, for curing him of rheumatism, Charles Park, an electrician, left the institution.

When the surgeons at the hospital decided that Sarasin Glesia, a warty patient, would die unless wholesome blood could be infused into his veins, they cast about

for some one who would submit to an operation.

Glesia, who was brought to the hospital from his home in Brooklyn, suffered from an aggravated case of neurosthenia. The surgeons offered \$5 for blood.

The offer brought one applicant. He was Park, who had been in the hospital several weeks suffering from rheumatism.

"You can take all the blood you like," he told the doctors. "I'm not looking for the \$5 so much as I am for a chance to do the hospital a turn. They have been mighty good to me, and I'm about well now. If you think the rheumatism doesn't matter, go ahead."

The physicians decided that Park was a good subject, in spite of his affliction, and the operation was performed. An opening was made in the wrist of each man, and between a pint and a quart of blood was sent from Park's body into that of Glesia. It was said that the operation was a marked success, and that Glesia would recover.

Skippers of Sailing Vessels Quit.

The wane of the sailing vessel on the high seas was illustrated in Philadelphia when the Philadelphia Vessel Owners and Captains' Association went out of existence after thirty-nine years of activity.

The directors of the association, who in recent years have been extensive owners of sail tonnage, find their vessels have nearly all been lost in the last few years; and, as those that remain are few in number, there is no further need for the association. Last winter's gales in the stretch of Atlantic coast from Cape Hatteras to Cape Cod destroyed, in the three months, property amounting to \$6,000,000.

The opening of the Panama Canal will be another death blow to sailing vessels which have been rounding Cape Horn.

German Count Becomes Moving-picture Actor.

Count Wolff Maternich, of Berlin, Germany, who recently was acquitted on a charge of cardsharpping, entered a new profession as a moving-picture actor, with his Viennese wife, an actress, named Clair Valentin.

He acted at Potsdam in the new huge Cinema Palace. His part was that of an aged count, who, after various adventures, wins the hand of a young and beautiful countess by means of a marvelous display of all kinds of sportsmanship. Maternich and his wife are said to have received \$10,000 for their services. The film will be a Berlin novelty.

Conductor Shouts "Hide Your Valuables."

Passengers on the Mobile & Ohio train, held up near Corinth, Miss., arrived in St. Louis. Members of the train crew asserted the robbers secured \$60,000.

Scores of women, many of them delegates to the National Mothers' Congress at St. Louis, were on the train.

The women said that when the train was stopped the conductor ran through the cars shouting for all passengers to hide their valuables. They heard the explosion which wrecked the safe, but the passengers were not molested.

The express messenger, William Snoddy, told further details of the robbery.

"I had no idea the train was being robbed when it stopped," he said. "The first I

knew anything was wrong was when I heard something crash against the door of my car.

"Then the door gave way and, the first thing I knew a man had jumped in. He threw a revolver up and ordered me to put up my hands. He ordered me to keep still, and then another man came in. I was ordered then to leave the car. Outside, one man guarded me; another was busy in the car for several minutes. Then he, too, came out. A minute later came the explosion, as the safe was forced open."

Aged 69, Dances Eight Hours.

Dancing for almost eight consecutive hours at a party, in honor of his sixty-ninth birthday, is the record of H. A. Tooley of Valley City, N. D.

Prompt Action Avoids Strike.

The owners of the Utica Steam and Mohawk Valley Cotton Mills, at Utica, N. Y., headed off a probable strike of 5,000 textile operatives by announcing a 10-per-cent advance in wages. The operatives at a meeting voted to demand a 15-per-cent increase, but they compromised on the 10-per-cent advance.

Arctic Birds Floor Man in the Zoo.

Timothy O'Connor, a bricklayer, who works for the park department, in New York, was chased out of the cage occupied by the pelicans and arctic geese in the Central Park menagerie by its tenants. He went in to repair the brick tank, but left in a hurry after his legs, hands, and face had been pecked by the birds. When he got outside, he said to Head Keeper William Snyder:

"We have had an awful time."

He said if they would let him off from that job and, instead, give him something to do in the lion cage, he would be much obliged. He was persuaded to go back into the birds' enclosure, and, after Dolly, one of the arctic geese presented to the park by W. E. D. Stokes, had knocked him flat on his back two or three times, he was allowed to work in peace.

O'Connor played to a capacity audience of nurse girls and children, who thought he was doing it all for their amusement.

Young Roosevelt a Bond Salesman.

Theodore Roosevelt, junior, son of former President Roosevelt, left his employment in a carpet factory in San Francisco to journey to New York to take a position in Wall Street.

Young Roosevelt will make his debut in financial circles as a bond salesman for the investment firm of Bertram, Griscom & Jenks. He will not be a member of the firm, and the assurance is given that the retention of his position will depend on his success in disposing of bonds offered by the firm.

Boy Candidate for Carnegie Medal.

John S. Hardy, aged 10 years, lies at his home, in the Laurel Ridge Mountains, near Uniontown, Pa., with both arms dislocated and his arms, face, and body badly lacerated, the result of the heroic rescue of his father and an aged neighbor from death in a swollen mountain torrent.

The Hardy family was awakened by cries for help early one morning. William H. McDowell, aged 88, was found in the doorway of his hut, praying for help while

the hut was floating down Devil's Creek toward a waterfall 300 feet in depth.

Charles Hardy, father of John, raced with the hut until somewhat ahead of it, then plunged into the creek and reached McDowell. He started to return to shore with the aged mountaineer, and was thrown a rope by his son, John, who had fastened it about his waist.

The two men held on, but their combined weight dragged John along the shore until he grasped the trunk of a tree, calling for help. As neighbors arrived, John fainted and was carried to his home by the men he had rescued.

State Senator Fears Suffragettes.

State Senator T. Harvey Ferris, of Utica, N. Y., announced that he would not seek or accept a renomination. Senator Ferris incurred the displeasure of the woman suffragists of Utica by casting his vote against the woman suffrage bill, and the announcement that he would not seek reelection was made coincident with a veiled threat by the women that they would attempt to defeat him if he sought another term.

Methodists Denounce Bridge Parties.

"The theater, the dance, and the card parties are the three greatest modern evils," declared the Reverend Doctor A. N. Chapman, Methodist minister of Denver, Colo., in discussing the topic scheduled for debate before the forty-fourth annual meeting of a conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"I am generally opposed to card playing, dancing, and theater going," went on Doctor Chapman, "because so many people are swept off their feet morally by these forms of popular amusements, and I think it is well for the church to have rules regarding participation in them."

"Most people enter the church very young, when they are incapable of a proper discrimination in amusements, both because of lack of experience and undeveloped judgment."

The Reverend Frost Craft advocated individual discretion rather than church rule, and adopted the slogan: "Drop it or enforce it," in regard to the rule in Methodist discipline against these diversions.

"Rules against these popular amusements do not control people, and the people do not obey them. They should be taken from the church laws."

Doctor Elmer E. Higley, a Methodist divine, was most broadminded in his view of these three much-mooted amusements. "Excess is especially to be condemned," declared Doctor Higley. "When mothers go game crazy, and neglect home to attend card functions, card playing is fundamentally wrong and harmful."

Doctor Higley declared that many dances are distinctly harmful from a physical standpoint, and that they should be carefully regulated.

Trapper Traps Lion in His Coat.

To deliberately climb a tree, unarmed, in pursuit of a mountain lion, follow the beast out to the farthestmost limb, and as it springs at him, catch it head-on in the folds of a coat, is a feat of daring performed by Richard Tovey, a trapper, of Meeker, Col. When the beast sprang, Tovey barely had time to straighten up and open his coat, and the lion struck head foremost, a grunting, scratching mass,

squarely within its folds. The impact caused the trapper to lose his balance, and the two fell to the ground, but Tovey did not loosen his hold. Neither Tovey nor the lion was hurt.

Good Shooting by Western Collegians.

Iowa University set a new record at Washington, D. C., in amateur rifle matches by winning the series of shoots in the Western section of the intercollegiate rifle league without losing to any one of its eight competitors. The final scores were:

Iowa defeated Michigan, 958 to 855; Purdue defeated St. Thomas, 927 to 726; Minnesota defeated Michigan Aggies, 926 to 886; California defeated Arizona, 922 to 854; Nebraska defeated Kansas, 861 to 847, a default. Completed scores made Minnesota third in the matches and Michigan Aggies third.

Remarkable Island of Sulphur and Gypsum.

A traveler who recently returned to New York from the South Seas, reported that New Zealand has one of the most marvelous and phenomenal islands in the world. It is situated in the Bay of Plenty, and is called White Island, and consists mainly of sulphur mixed with gypsum and a few other minerals. Over the island, which is about three miles in circumference, and rises over 800 feet above the sea, there continually floats an immense cloud of vapor, often attaining an altitude of 10,000 feet. In the center is a boiling lake of acid-charged water, covering 50 acres and surrounded with blow holes, from which steam and sulphurous fumes are emitted with great force and noise. With care a boat can be navigated on the lake.

College Professor Says Muscle Tires Before Brain.

According to Professor Walter Dill Scott, of the Northwestern University, the brain can stand persistent work better than the muscles. After a series of experiments on five students, says the New York *American*, he declared that daily tests with finger and thumb on a dynamometer made for thirty days showed an increase of muscular power of more than 700 per cent.

But the brain, tested in adding figures, solving difficult puzzles, and other similar feats, showed a greater increase than the muscles.

"His announcement rather puts to flight the theory so commonly accepted that the man working with his brain tires much more quickly than the man digging in the street."

Occultists Urge Cultivation of Side Vision.

At a meeting of the leading occultists of the United States, it was stated that one of the most useful gifts one can have is a good side vision. By side vision is meant literally ability to see in several directions at once, and to know what is going on in other directions besides that upon which the gaze may be fixed at the moment.

Just try, the next time you are reading your paper in the train, for instance, and you will understand clearly what is meant.

Now, can, with little effort and while still reading, follow the movements of those sitting opposite you and even those at your side.

With a little practice the range of your side vision can be extended behind you in each direction to an angle of forty-five de-

grees, and you can see clearly every movement that takes place on both sides simultaneously.

Now, just think what this means. The man in possession of a good side vision is not an easy one to take by surprise. In business he finds it a valuable asset, especially when talking with more than one person at a time.

He can guard against dangers from unexpected sources, and when crossing a roadway he can clearly see the traffic coming from either direction while still looking straight ahead.

Jamaicans Sell Tobacco by Yard.

On Saturday afternoons in the Port Antonio market, on the island of Jamaica, a dozen or more negroes may be seen selling "rope" tobacco by the yard. It is smoked by the natives, and derives its name from the fact that it is twisted and put up in coils like rope, 200 yards to the coil.

Movies Can't "Get" the Pope.

The Vatican officers, in Rome, Italy, refused an offer of 200,000 lire—approximately \$400,000—made by moving picture men for the privilege of taking "movies" of the pope receiving pilgrims.

Plenty of Work in Germany.

A correspondent writes to the New York *Evening Sun* as follows:

"I am somewhat astounded to see that you call the United States in comparison to Germany the land of ceaseless activity. That statement may be correct in regard to the old Germany, but never to the new one from to-day.

"Think of it! We have over there 356 persons to the square mile, whereas you have, if I am not mistaken, only thirty-seven. Nevertheless, we had last year alone an immigration of 125,000 Austrians, Russians, Italians, and only an emigration of 25,000 Germans. There must be something to do."

New York Suffragettes Cable Asquith.

Sylvia Pankhurst, daughter of the leader of the English suffragette movement, spoke at Carnegie Lyceum, New York, on the reasons for the outbreaks of the suffragettes in England, and at the close the audience voted to send a cable of sympathy to the suffragettes and another to Premier Asquith demanding votes for women.

There was a discussion before the vote was taken. An Englishman in the audience took exception to it as being a breach of national ethics. Several persons wished to have the two messages voted upon separately, but they finally went through as a whole, only a baker's dozen of persons remaining seated in a rising vote.

H. H. Knox moved the resolution, the message to the Woman's Social and Political Union, reading:

"Complete sympathy in your efforts for complete human liberty."

The one to Premier Asquith said:

"Give your brave Englishwomen the vote; the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

Prepares His Own Obituary.

Doctor John H. Musser, professor of clinical medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, and known all over the country, died from heart disease. Famous as a diagnostician, Doctor Musser

made an accurate diagnosis of his own condition, and made all preparations for death. He prepared an account of his achievements, to be given to the newspapers, and selected the church from which his funeral was to be held, the clergyman, and the pallbearers.

Several days before his death, Doctor Musser wrote to the editor of a local paper inclosing his latest photograph, with the injunction that it would be found necessary to use it soon.

Maple Trees for School Children.

William F. Gable, of Altoona, Pa., distributed 20,000 silver maple trees among children of the public schools, for planting to beautify the city.

Foreign Boxers Coming.

Frank Erne, former lightweight champion pugilist, sailed from New York for France, where he had arranged to take over the management of a number of prominent fighters whom he expects to bring to the United States. George Carpentier, the sensational French fighter, who recently won the middleweight championship of England and France, will be among those brought over by Erne.

Disbarred Lawyer Can't Change Name.

Because the clerk of Supreme Court Justice Gavegan saw in the newspapers a story of the disbarment of Armand Spenser, an attorney, by the appellate division, after Spenser had obtained from the justice an order permitting him to change his name, Justice Gavegan cancelled the order.

The court's decision did not disclose the name which Spenser desired to assume, nor the offense for which he was disbarred. Clerk Dougherty, in an affidavit, stated that he informed the justice of the newspaper revelations concerning Spenser, and submitted a record of the disbarment proceedings.

Investigating Conditions of the Highest Jump.

The wonderful jump of 6 feet 6½ inches credited to G. F. Horine, of Stanford University, received the indorsement of John Elliott, president of the Pacific Association of the A. A. U. Mr. Elliott notified Secretary James E. Sullivan, of the A. A. U., that the performance, which wipes Mike Sweeney's figures of 6 feet 5½ inches off the books, is correct.

The usual formalities will have to be observed, however, before the record is allowed. Athletes who have visited the coast state that there is a decided slope to the grounds, and before the record is allowed it will have to be established to the satisfaction of the record committee that Horine received no advantage either in the run to the takeoff or in landing after the jump was made.

Horine's ability as a jumper has long been recognized. He has cleared 6 feet 4 inches on a previous occasion, and was selected as a member of the all-American collegiate team last year.

Bad News for Circus Patrons.

Secretary Wilson, of the department of agriculture, in Washington, gave out a statement to the effect that he was greatly worried over the peanut crop.

Caterpillars, according to the "Father of the Cabinet," are doing \$3,000,000 a year

damage to a \$15,000,000 peanut crop, and it is high time the ravages of this worm cease.

The blight is killing the chestnuts, black walnuts are almost extinct, hickory nuts are growing scarcer, and now comes the Indian meal moth, intent on eating up the peanuts before they reach the market.

French Art Treasures in the United States.

Wealthy Americans who, by traveling abroad, have viewed the world's greatest art treasures, will no longer exclusively have that privilege. It has taken France to appreciate the American love of art, and, by an arrangement just concluded between the French government and the officers of a newly formed organization, which calls itself "The Institute and Museum of French Art in the United States," selected exhibits are to be temporarily withdrawn from display in France and shown here.

According to Franklyn Paris, chairman of the committee on literature and a director of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, there are American millions behind the project to erect a magnificent building to be used exclusively for the display of these art objects.

While the French sponsors concern themselves with gathering exhibition pieces, photographs, moldings, lantern slides, books, et cetera, for display in the New York museum, the American members of the association will assume the responsibility of installing and advantageously showing the loaned objects. The purpose of the association is to spread the knowledge of French art throughout the United States, and to familiarize Americans with its application to everyday uses, as in furniture, tapestries, woodwork, porcelain bronzes, mural decorations, et cetera. It is to be strictly altruistic and educational, and not commercial in any sense or particular.

Chief among the supporters in the movement to make the museum in New York a success are Leroy White, Otto Kahn, Edward Tuck, J. W. Alexander, Thomas Hastings, W. Franklyn Paris, James Stillman, Whitney Warren, Lloyd Warren, T. T. Stilson Wells, William B. Osgood Field, J. Freedlander, President Finley, of the City College, and Chancellor MacCracken, of the New York University.

Mayor Says Boston is Best-governed City.

"They won't get me on the job of mayor after the first Monday in February, 1914," said Mayor Fitzgerald, of Boston, in an address before the Intercolonial Club. He declared Boston was one of the best-governed cities in the United States.

And Yet They Want Tips.

There are instances of waiters who have affected the destinies of nations. Descending to merely moneyed waiters, examples are legion. There have been several cases where persons sending for the proprietor of their hotel have discovered him in the head waiter or the hall porter, and the ambition of many waiters is ultimately to own a restaurant of their own. Many of them do it for these waiters are an eager and vigorous crew.

There is one notable little restaurant in London, England, whose proprietor worked there a generation ago as assistant waiter, and who is now mayor of his native town in Italy. In Vienna the colors of a head waiter are among the most prominent on

the racing field. The head boots of the famous hotel in the Trossachs is said to have amassed \$85,000 in five years.

With such circumstances it is not surprising to find that members of the aristocracy are taking to the waiter's profession. Viscount Charles Calosso, of London, a waiter, was a witness in a police court case, and when, some time ago, the waiters of New York started a club of their own they were very rigorous that no "amateurs, ex-stewards stewards from Atlantic steamships, and scallywags" were to be admitted. Class distinction must be maintained. New York has its waiters' clubs, where the waiters have waiters to wait on them, and tip them out of their tips. And it is not surprising to find that the London branch of the Geneva Union, an international association of waiters, which already has its own well-equipped club house, its own athletic club, and its own cemetery, is prepared to spend \$25,000 on new premises.

American Miners Held by Mexican Bandits.

Harry Conklin, of Lacrosse, Wis., in a letter smuggled through the revolutionary lines from Lluvia De Oro, Chihuahua, Mexico, to his mother in Lacrosse, said that he and a party of Americans were held captive there by about 300 Mexican bandits, and that their lives were in danger.

Lluvia De Oro is a small settlement of American miners.

Thousands of Hoboes Killed on Railroad.

More than 5,500 arrests for trespassing and 3,500 for illegal train riding on the lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad were made last year.

The dangers of trespassing are made evident by the railroad's figures, showing that 8,523 trespassers had been killed and 8,285 injured since 1900. Statistics show that 55 per cent of the trespassers were self-supporting, and in many cases well-to-do people, while the remainder were tramps.

Explorer Finds New Kind of Butterfly.

In a recently published book, "Our Search for a Wilderness," William Beebe, of the New York Zoological Park, describes his first sight of the transparent butterfly of British Guinea, an insect through whose outstretched wings any substance on which it rests can be clearly seen.

"As we crossed a swirling creek on the trunk of a mighty fallen tree," he writes, "something fluttered ahead. We could not see what it was. Closer we came, and still the object remained indistinct. We seemed to see a butterfly, and yet that appeared impossible. At last we marked it down on a fern frond and crept up until our eyes were within two feet of it. Nothing was visible but the graceful lacework of the frond until a slanting beam of sunlight struck it, and there, close before us, was the ghost of a butterfly.

It spread fully three inches, but was wholly transparent, save for three tiny spots of azure near the margin of each hind wing.

"As we looked, it drifted to a double-headed flower of scarlet, and when it alighted the scarlet of the flower and the green of the leaf were as distinct as if seen through thin mica, and the faint gray haze of the insect's wings was marked only by the indistinct venation.

"The appearance of this ghostly butter-

fly amid the silence and awe-inspiring stillness of the reeking jungle was most impressive."

What the Farmers Want.

State Grange Master Cressy, of Pennsylvania, has some good ideas on what is required to make cooperation successful. He suggests the following:

First, through organization; second, the proper appreciation of community needs; third, the abandonment of selfishness to the general good; fourth, reliable information on crops, to be secured through crop reports; fifth, the development of communities as producing centers for those things to which the community is especially adapted; sixth, conservative business judgment. This idea of cooperation was given definite shape in the resolutions to establish a central State cooperative organization by the Pennsylvania State Grange, with subsidiary county and subordinate societies.

Its working out will be watched with great interest by other Grange States. All recognize its importance, but to cooperate really and successfully is a problem not easily solved. The committee on cooperation believed that "the State Grange is strong enough to develop such a cooperative enterprise as will be a source of profit to the members of the order, while at the same time affording the general public relief from the burdensome exactions of our present method of receiving and marketing farm crops and the grossly unfair business methods used in selling to the farmer those things which he must have in his business."

An Englishman's Cat.

"An Englishman who recently arrived in this country went to Kansas to visit some of the Lord Scully lands, and while wandering about ran onto a small white skunk," says the *Kansas City Journal*. "Afterward, on making inquiry as to what kind of animal it was and the name of it, he was told that it was a polecat. After he had changed his clothes he sat down and wrote to his family back in England as follows:

"I have been out looking over the country to-day, and in traveling about I met with an American cat, a beautiful little creature, but I think it had the most offensive breath, don't you know, of any animal I ever saw in my life."

Joan of Arc no Suffragette.

Father Bernard Vaughan, the Jesuit priest from London, lectured at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, in New York, on Joan of Arc. Cardinal Farley presided, and Signor Marconi, the inventor of the wireless telegraph, introduced the speaker.

Father Vaughan began by saying that he was going to present Joan's life as she herself had put it before the world. He asserted that he was not in sympathy with persons like Anatole France and Jules Verne, who have put their own interpretation upon her life because her account of it did not happen to suit their own peculiar theories of this world.

The child Joan, he said, was pure, bright, sweet, and full of promise, and she used all her opportunities. In this she stood in sharp contrast to Charles, the Dauphin, who lost all of his. It was a type of character like that of Charles which begot socialism. Charles was a good for nothing, an idler, a might have been, said Father Vaughan.

The lecturer pointed out that after her victories at Orleans, and after the crowning of the king at Reims, the soldier maid, if she had had her own way, would have returned to her village green. She was one whom success could not spoil.

Father Vaughan contended that the martyrdom was necessary to complete her life as an object lesson to the world. Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, was not representing the church in presiding at Joan's trial, the Jesuit pointed out, and the tribunal was not a valid ecclesiastical court. Cauchon was the contemptible tool of the Duke of Bedford.

Joan herself, realizing the irregularity of the situation and what was likely to be the method of procedure in her trial, protested against it vehemently, repeating again and again the cry: "I appeal to the Pope!" Pope Calixtus III restored her good name and Pius X beatified her.

Father Vaughan asserted his belief that if Joan of Arc were living to-day she would not be a suffragette. If she were here to-day, he said, she might break our hearts, but she would never break our windows.

Are Those Diamonds in Her Heels Genuine.

Mrs. Charles H. Anthony, of diamond-heels fame, rubbed her eyes in astonishment when she was shown, in New York, a Muncie, Ind., dispatch, which stated her husband told the assessor in Muncie, where the Anthonys live: "You can buy that kind of gems for \$5 a quart," speaking of Mrs. Anthony's heels.

"Well, of all things," she gasped, "I feel terribly embarrassed. Charlie knows as well as I do that those stones are genuine. He bought them himself. It's one of his jokes, but I don't like it very much. It makes me appear so terribly foolish.

"I shall send Charlie a telegram and tell him not to make any more comments like that. I suppose, as it is taxpaying time, he thought maybe the assessor might take advantage of those stories of my beautiful diamonds. Each stone was bought with great care. I haven't a single diamond that cannot bear the closest scrutiny from an expert."

Troubles of Baseball Managers.

One of the most difficult points the management of baseball teams has to solve in spring is the problem of giving the big squad of recruits adequate individual attention. If a recruit does not flash strong inside the three weeks' training period he's a discard. Not being given any great personal attention, owing to the size of squads, many good men have thus been permitted to slip back.

Admiral Leaves Money to Quaker Poor.

The will of Rear Admiral George W. Melville, of the United States navy and arctic explorer, probated in Philadelphia, sets aside a fund estimated at \$150,000 for placing deserving poor and aged persons in institutions where they can receive proper care. Such persons must be of the Protestant faith or of the Society of Friends, and must be over 70 years old. No person preserving any traces of the African or Asiatic race is eligible to become a beneficiary under the terms of the will. Five thousand dollars is given to the mechanical engineering school of the University of Pennsylvania, and similar amounts to the engineer-

ing departments of Columbia University and Stevens Institute.

All medals, swords, and other things received by the admiral during his naval and arctic careers are given to the Pennsylvania Commandery of the Loyal Legion.

The admiral's estate is valued at between \$300,000 and \$400,000, and relatives and friends are liberally provided for.

Housewives League Will Enforce Laws.

"Our American home is in danger, because of the present economic conditions," said Mrs. Julian Heath before the Woman's Suffrage Party, in New York. "Women everywhere are rallying to the movement, which started as a small idea, but which has now become nation wide. This all means that women are interested in this great crusade for the protection of the home."

"Marriage is a partnership—man the producer, woman the spender. It is her duty to so spend the money the man produces that her family shall be properly clothed and fed. The time has come when women realize they must put their housekeeping on a business basis, managed in a scientific manner."

Mrs. Heath said the members of the Housewives' League, of which she is president, are each going to inspect weights and cleanliness of things they purchase, instead of relying on departments which have an insufficient number of inspectors, and they are going to see to it that the laws are enforced.

New York's Queer Clocks.

In a Third Avenue restaurant, in New York, there has been, for more than twenty years, an odd clock on the wall. The clock is placed in a frying pan. The bottom of the pan forms the face of the clock, and the hours are numbered on oyster shells fastened to the pan. The hour and minute hands are a fork and knife.

Other curious clocks stand in out-of-the-way corners of the city. In a dime museum that used to be on the Bowery there stood for many years a huge clock, about the size of the ordinary rollout desk, said to have been made by a cripple with the aid of a fretsaw and a jackknife. This clock was made of 70,000 pieces of wood of different kinds. It had live dials, showing the time in London, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and New York; there were also dials that indicated the phases of the moon, orbit of the earth, small figures representing the Last Supper, the crucifixion, and other Biblical scenes. The quarters, halves, and hours were struck on small bells by gnomelike figures made to resemble familiar dwarfs in the Sleepy Hollow scene of "Rip Van Winkle." For many years this clock was the main feature in the museum.

August Belmont Interested in Workmen's Compensation.

With workers' compensation and the prevention of industrial accidents as the subjects of discussion, August Belmont, chairman of the workmen's compensation department, presided at the meeting of the National Civic Federation, in Washington, D. C.

Senator Sutherland, of Utah, spoke on Federal legislation to provide compensation for injured railroad employees.

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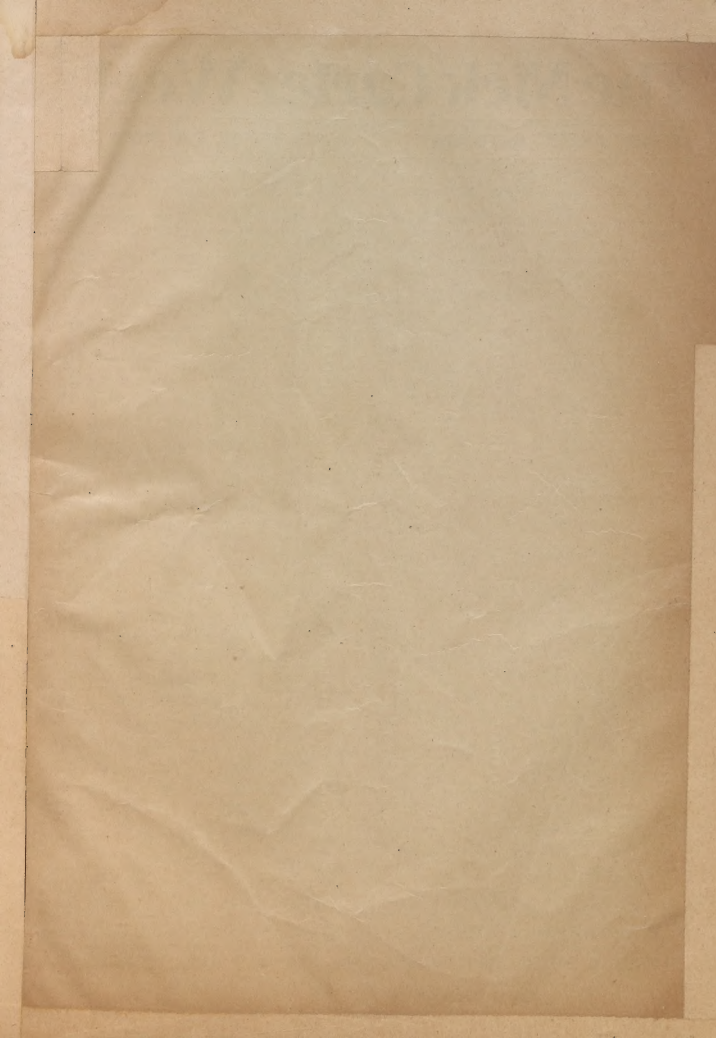
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